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# **PROVERBS FOR THE PEOPLE.**



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**PROVERBS FOR THE PEOPLE:**

OR

**ILLUSTRATIONS OF PRACTICAL GODLINESS DRAWN  
FROM THE BOOK OF WISDOM.**

BY

**E. L. MAGOON,**

AUTHOR OF "THE ORATORS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION."

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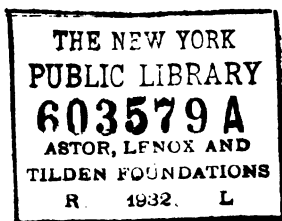
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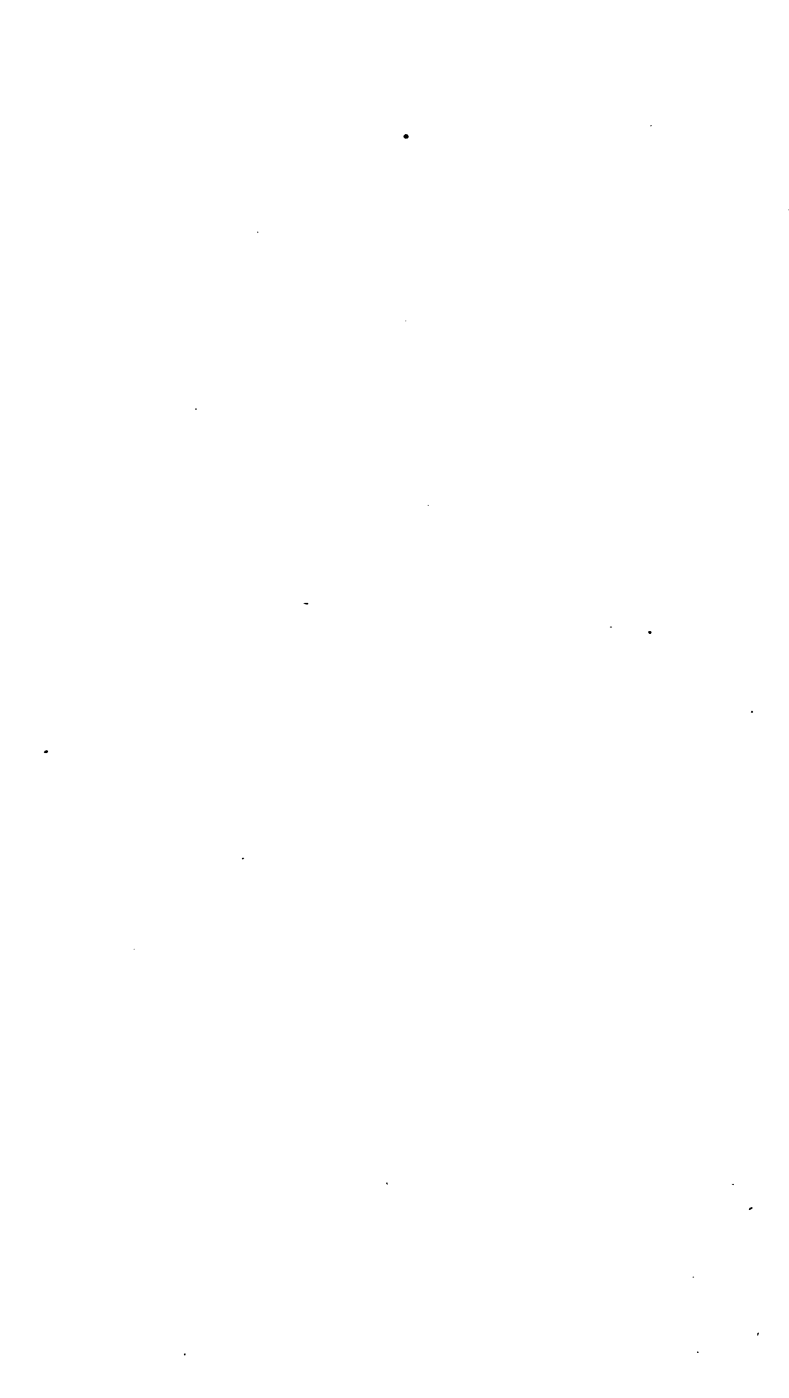
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## P R E F A C E.

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IN the work herewith submitted to the public, an attempt is made to discuss the exalted principles of Christian morality in a manner adapted to the comprehension of the great mass of mankind. Each topic is designed to be complete in itself, and to bear directly on the practical duties of life. The author considers that it is essential for one to be orthodox in belief, and that it is of some importance at least that the professed Christian should demonstrate in his ordinary conduct the excellence of his religious creed. It is supposed that we contend for abstract dogmas with full as much zeal as we emulate each other in good deeds. If there is a deficiency in this respect, religious teachers may not be entirely exempt from blame. Should they rightly divide the word of God, and give each man his portion in due season, wisely discriminated and discreetly enforced, perhaps we might have an increased amount of enduring piety

coupled with sound morals in the pew, the shop, and counting-room.

Said John Foster, "In the department of Christian morality, I think many of those who are distinguished as evangelical preachers greatly and culpably deficient. They rarely, if ever, take some one topic of moral duty, as honesty, veracity, impartiality, Christian temper, forgiveness of injuries, temperance—in any of its branches,—the improvement of time—and investigate specifically its principles, rules, discriminations, adaptations. There is none of the *casuistry* found in many of the old divines. Such discussions would have cost far more labor of thought than dwelling and expatiating on the general evangelical doctrines; but would have been eminently useful; and it is very necessary, in order to set the people's judgment and consciences to rights. It is partly in consequence of this neglect (very general, I believe,) that many religious kind of people have unfixed and ill-fated apprehensions of moral discriminations." The testimony of Robert Hall is equally in point. "Be not afraid of devoting whole sermons to particular parts of moral conduct and religious duties. It is impossible to give right views of them, unless you dissect characters, and describe particular virtues and vices. 'The fruits of the flesh,' and 'the fruits of the

Spirit,' must be distinctly pointed out. To preach against sin in general, without descending to particulars, may lead many to complain of the evil of their hearts, while, at the same time, they are wholly inattentive to the evil of their conduct."

In constructing the following chapters, the author has relied mainly on the teachings of the Holy Scriptures, but not exclusively. Ethical writers, ancient sages and modern poets have recorded striking thoughts on the themes herein discussed, and their affirmations are regarded as none the less pertinent and valuable because they did not enslave themselves to a sect, nor serve limited circles as bigoted dogmatists. The best impressions of the best minds in every age and clime can be, and ought to be, subordinated to the illustration and enforcement of the great doctrines which relate to man's temporal and eternal weal.



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# PROVERBS FOR THE PEOPLE.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

#### THE WISE PREACHER.

“THE preacher set in order many proverbs,” Eccl. 12: 9. Solomon wrote this text at the close of his mission as an inspired teacher, and while under the greatest solicitude to do good. He had profited by critical and comprehensive observation, as well as by profound reflection, and had learned much from experience good and bad. Feeling the vanity of earthly enjoyments, and the inefficiency of human wisdom, he devoutly seeks to draw his readers to heavenly sources, and would imprint on their mind divine precepts.

In subsequent chapters, it will be our purpose to expound a number of the wise preacher’s proverbs; at present, as introductory to the series, we will consider their general character, as being pleasing, practical, ennobling, and salutary.

First, the Proverbs of Solomon are *pleasing to refined taste*. The wise man himself gave the happiest definition of the sententious aphorisms and parables of wisdom he had sought out and set in order, when he said they were like apples of gold in pictures of silver,—substantial worth symmetrically embodied and elegantly adorned. He was a preacher accustomed to employ acceptable words full of pungent and profitable instruction. No man ever excelled him in the happy

combination of exalted principle and exact detail of practice,—admonition that is faithful, conveyed in language the most fascinating and kind. Like the prince of apostles under a later dispensation, he exhorts, comforts, and reproves, as a father doth his children. The benevolence of his heart equals the sagacity of his mind; he is severe, without being repulsive, and eminently instructive, without being either frigid or dry.

An eminent modern student and translator of Solomon's works, speaks of them as follows: "The great object in each of the Proverbs is, to enforce a moral principle in words so few, that they may be easily learned, and so curiously selected and arranged, that they may strike and fix the attention instantaneously; while, to prevent the mind from becoming fatigued by a long series of detached sentences, they are perpetually diversified by the changes of style and figure. Sometimes the style is rendered striking by its peculiar simplicity, or the familiarity of its illustration; sometimes by the grandeur or loftiness of the simile employed on the occasion; sometimes by an enigmatical obscurity, which rouses the curiosity; very frequently by a strong and catching antithesis; occasionally by a playful iteration of the same word; and in numerous instances by the elegant pleonasms or the expansion of a single or common idea by a luxuriance of agreeable words."

Every intelligent reader of that portion of the Bible here referred to, will certify to the justness of the critical judgment just quoted. Of the universal attractiveness and utility of such sententious forms of instruction, no other testimony need be added to what is contained in the following judicious words by Cardan: "Brevity of language is of excellent service to persons of competent ability and knowledge, though to stupid and ignorant persons it may be useless. To those who have the power of understanding many things comprised in few words, this style impresses the mind with more force,



brings light and prevents things from vanishing through oblivion ; does not produce weariness ; and while it increases the authority of the speaker, augments also in the hearer the desire of being gratified."

In the second place, proverbs are *practical in their use*. True religion is not of the head only, nor of the heart only ; it is the cultivator and nourisher of all our faculties, and acts upon our whole person, in its legitimate development, as the God of nature forms a tree or flower, unfolding all parts at the same time, breathing life and beauty on every leaf. The proverbs of Solomon teem with wisdom the most august, the most comprehensive, and the most practical. They are condensed maxims, fitted to every region and adapted to all ages. Their author was inspired with superhuman wisdom, and this gives dignity to his instructions ; he was wonderfully skilled in the knowledge of mankind, and this renders his teaching always pertinent, since the constituent elements of our race never change.

The portion of sacred record now under consideration is of especial importance to young persons. "It is," says Dr. Good, "chiefly confined to the conduct of early life. All the most formidable dangers to which this season is exposed, and the sins which most easily beset it, are painted with the hand of a master. And while the progress and issues of vice are exhibited under a variety of the most striking delineations and metaphors in their utmost deformity and horror ; all the beauties of language, and all the force of eloquence are poured forth in the diversified form of earnest expostulation, insinuating tenderness, captivating argument and sublime allegory, to win the ingenuous youth to virtue and piety, and to fix him in a steady pursuit of his duties towards God and man. Virtue is pronounced in the very outset to be essential wisdom, and vice or wickedness essential folly. The only wise man, therefore, is declared to be the truly good and virtuous, or he that fears God, and reverences his law ; while the man of vice

and wickedness is a fool, a stubborn or perverse wretch, and an abomination to Jehovah."

In dealing with the writings of Solomon, as with all other inspired penmen, it should be our main endeavor to attach to each sentence its own literal and specific meaning, as it is under this rule that we most directly arrive at its spiritual signification—the mind of the Spirit. We are bound to draw practical instruction from the literal meaning of each proverb. It is designed that in this way we should find the greatest variety and the richest abundance. Lord Bacon, in his "Advancement of Learning," viewing the Proverbs in this light, speaks of them in the highest strain of praise. "Beside a code of laws directly religious, a variety of admirable rules stream forth from the deep recesses of wisdom, and spread over the whole field." It is this diversity and wealth of admirable rules, adapted to all classes and pursuits, that we propose to consider in subsequent chapters.

It is practical religion in the pulpit and in the pew, in the common walks of life and in all the pursuits of business, that we most need. The inculcation of duty is no less essential than the defence of doctrine. The hypocritical professor of godliness may not relish the preaching that exacts consistency; but they who sincerely desire to glorify God in their profession, will not complain when told how exalted are the preceptive laws of that religion they are pledged to exemplify. Some portions of Scripture are designed to show us the glory of our high calling; while other parts, of equal importance, minutely and with infinite solicitude detail to us how we are to walk worthy of it. From the writings of Paul, we learn our ultimate completeness in Christ; but a careful observance of Solomon's precepts will effectually teach us how that completeness is obtained. We may reasonably glory in our high exaltation, as joint heirs with our Lord, made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; but it would be unwise to do this without remembering that the first law of the

Messiah's kingdom requires that we should deal justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God.

It is the symptom of a diseased condition, when a patient desires intoxicating draughts, rather than wholesome aliment. When a religionist is more voracious of excitement than instruction, and is much more prompt to fight for a dogma than to illustrate his infallibility by a noble demeanor, he would do well to search into the divinity of a faith which is so barren of heavenly deeds. Sir Mathew Hale esteemed it the most conducive to spiritual health, "to be impressed and affected, and to have old and known truths reduced to experience and practice." It will not answer that the mighty things of the Gospel—the realities of eternity—should have a place in denominational hand-books and not in our hearts. What is shut up in human creeds will probably be resorted to on sacred days; but that only which is divinely breathed into the soul will mould it into the image of God and be reduced to practice at every step of our earthly pilgrimage.

Thirdly, sacred Proverbs are *ennobling in their tendency*.

In the first place, they present the most concise forms of wisdom. Proverbial teaching is one of the most ancient and efficient modes of instruction. The sayings of the seven sages of Greece, and the choice maxims of other renowned teachers of antiquity, are preserved with great care and deemed of the greatest value.

But undoubtedly the best specimens in form and substance are the Proverbs of the Bible, and these are of the very earliest date. "As saith the proverb of the ancients," is an expression in the first book of Samuel, which indicates that this form of teaching was recognized long before Solomon. But it was the wisdom of that monarch that gave to aphoristic sayings their greatest renown. In the first book of Kings we are told that "he spake three thousand proverbs." The most regal thing about Solomon was his intellect, and this he seems to have exercised with the greatest diligence. Classic ages

and more recent times have produced distinguished men who have imitated his style, but none have ever emulated with success the depth and force of his thought; he was "the disciple of none, but the instructor of them all."

It is to this author alone that the apostrophe of the son of Sirach can justly be applied: "How wise wast thou in thy youth, and as a flood filled with understanding! Thy soul covered the whole earth, and thou fillest it with dark parables." Eusebius, referring to this last expression, remarks of Solomon, that while "inspired by divine wisdom, he consecrated all his writings to the profit and salvation of souls; yet he used these 'dark parables' for the exercise of the mind."

In the second place, in proverbs we have the most profitable type of wisdom. Their statements of doctrine may not be so explicit as in some later portions of Scripture, but what they do assert is of the very highest importance. In particular are we here taught to combine reflection with action—nourishing a mind that ponders over a heart that prays. If we would soar above the sickly regions of effeminate sentimentalism, we must search for novelty and excitement with less avidity than for the rugged and enduring elements of solid instruction. As saith the author of the Book of Wisdom, "Set your affection upon my words. Desire them, and ye shall be instructed. Wisdom is glorious, and never fadeth away; yea, she is easily seen of those that love her, and found of such as seek her. She preventeth those that desire her, in making herself first known unto them. Whoso seeketh her early shall have no great travail; for he shall find her sitting at his doors. Whoso watcheth for her shall quickly be without care. For she goeth about seeking such as are worthy of her, sheweth herself favorably unto them in the ways, and meeteth them in every thought."

Religion, to be permanently influential, must be intelligent. Nothing can be foreign to the welfare of the soul that is productive of light and vigor to the mind. A discrimination of

this sort—a divorcing of the heart and intellect at the shrine of highest worship—is a distinction without a difference. Christ instituted the sacrament commemorative of his mission and triumph with elements the most substantial and exhilarating, and such should all religious instruction be.

Theoretic Christianity must necessarily become practical, before it can either benefit man or glorify Immanuel. He who loves his creed more than he loves the happiness of mankind,—the fanatic who abounds more in passions than in reasons,—and the censorious zealot who vituperates all Christians not of his own sect, would do well to indicate in their own exalted character what they mean by arrogating to themselves superlative excellence, and why they obtrude their claims before the world as especial saints.

Religion is not so much an arbitrary assemblage of dogmatic rules printed in a book or stored in the memory, as a living principle which always signalizes its presence in its power to inspire active magnanimity and stamp grandeur on beneficent deeds. The highest truths are imprinted on the devout in order to be reflected in perpetual enterprise for God. Sacred principles are not designed to minister solace to selfishness nor sanctification to indolence, but are placed at our disposal to be humbly contemplated and perpetually employed. In the support of human indigence and the renovation of a depraved world, beneficence infinite and finite are always conjoined. When the multitudes of famishing wanderers were fed in the desert of Arabia with daily showers of angel's food, the hand of God alone could bestow the gift, but the common mercy of man must gather it. Power and goodness from on high are never bestowed on our race but through the power of goodness here below.

The proverbs of Solomon are invaluable, because they most clearly teach the importance of correct and immovable principles in the heart; conduct full of nobleness and integrity in every walk of life; the necessity and usefulness of self-

discipline ; and the importance of bringing every purpose as well as every act to the test of God's holy word. It is such broad and practical views of religious obligation that we need to have constantly before us. The sophist in Plato who thinks he can be pious while he persecutes his own father, and affirms that holiness being only a part of justice, is confined to the worship of God in temples, and that the ordinary conduct of life belongs to another sphere, reasons strangely, it is true, but in exact accordance with the apparent belief of many modern Christians.

The man of doctrine should exhibit the holiness of doctrine ; and his good example will be the divinest memorial he can place before his fellow-men, or leave behind him on the earth. But people much rather hear about their privileges than their duties. Prove to a man that he is elected to be self-willed, bigoted and lazy, a drone who is at ease in Zion and a scandal to those without, and he will be mightily edified. "O, that is sound doctrine," says he, "my soul will never starve on that."

When professors of religion are saints in their prayers and dishonest worldlings in their conduct, it is not strange if some sagacious observer should be reminded of Paul's exhortation to the Philippians, and say to such, "whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report—think on these things."

Fourthly, the scriptural maxims, the merits of which we are discussing, are not only pleasing to the taste, practical in their use, and ennobling in their tendency, but they are *saving in their design*.

We are told by the highest authority, that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness ; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." This is the design of the Bible—not to teach science, but religion ; not to make polemics, but men of

profound and practical godliness. That this was especially designed in the book of Proverbs is indicated by the fact, that, of all portions of the Old Testament, none is more frequently quoted in the New than this. Here, we not only have the minutest and most accurate observation of human nature, and the very best rules of common life, but everywhere shines out the most ravishing views of God and godliness. So that, as Scott well remarks, "we shall perceive the meaning and utility of the Proverbs, in proportion to our experience in true religion, our acquaintance with our own hearts, and with human nature, and the extent and accuracy of our observation on the character and affairs of men." Jerome's advice to one of his friends respecting the education of his daughter is: "Let her have first of all the book of Psalms for holiness of heart, and be instructed in the Proverbs of Solomon for her godly life." In the description which Mathew Henry gave of his admirable mother, he said she was "one who was well versed in Solomon's Proverbs, and the rules of wisdom, which may be fetched from thence for the conduct of human life, and knew how to apply them, and to use knowledge aright."

No one can place too high an estimate on these sacred words of counsel. Their author well defined their power to produce pungent and enduring impressions, when he compared them to "goads, and nails fastened by the Master of assemblies," closely driven home to the heart and conscience, where they enstamp themselves in permanent effects.

"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" inquired the royal bard of Israel; and his wise son has responded correctly, "By taking heed thereto according to thy word." Both father and son indited parts of the divine volume which Paul, writing to the Colossians, called "the Word of Christ." All parts, in order to be efficaciously studied, must be brought around the cross and read in the same supernatural light.

The wise preacher will set these Proverbs in order before

his people. The true ambassador is faithful. He shuns not to declare the whole counsel of God; not giving unnatural prominence to particular truths, but displaying all in a scriptural proportion and with judicious zeal. It is his business not to handle the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth to commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. The grand aim of the gospel ministry is, to deliver the jeopardized from the snares of the devil, who taketh men captive at his will. This can never be accomplished by pointless generalities. Particular sins must be specifically described; the perils to be avoided must be made known; then will instruction be the law of the wise to keep them in the divine path securely. When the tongue of a religious teacher is wise it is health, both to himself and to his people.

"God hath made everything beautiful in his time," says his word; every duty he has imposed is acceptable in its proportion and appropriate place. Religion is a matter as much of order as of grace. One table of the divine law is for heaven, the other for earth. Our relations to God will be most clearly discerned and best discharged, when we love mercy, deal justly, and walk humbly among men. If we are not Christians relatively and universally, then are we not *really*; if dishonest in our dealings with men, it is blasphemy to talk of communion with God. Where is our title to the skies, so long as we pollute earth with sins of heart, hand, or tongue? Have we a money transaction, a personal depreciation, or a secret sin of any kind, that we should be ashamed to have proclaimed upon the housetops? If so, then are the pretensions we make to superior sanctity the most aggravated crimes we commit. "What a God must he be," said a poor Asiatic of the Spaniards, "who has such bloody men for his servants and children." "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," said Jesus. It is impossible to make your religion one thing and your business another.



Those persons who have the highest notions in theology, often have the lowest and most contracted feelings. He who stickles most for his tithe of mint, annise, or cummin, will be most facile to omit the weightier matters of the law in every sense which seems to him to conflict with his avowed and furiously defended creed. In all such instances, a vulgar familiarity, or morbid gloom, takes the place of Christian simplicity; they engender strife by their dogmatic disputations, and create prolific discord and heart-burnings where the innoxious quietude of a wise faith would diffuse perpetual charity and peace. "Thou, O man of God, flee these things." Remember that it is only while we exercise our mental endowments and spiritual graces without affectation and without wrath, that we are gratified to impart, while we receive delight.

Everywhere in the Gospel are we warned against dangers of this kind. According to what we are told in the seventh of Matthew, the orthodox professor who takes up his opinion, and puts on appearances,—only to keep the spirit of charity out of his heart, and to quiet his conscience without striving after a holy life,—enters a way which seemeth right to him and pursues it not only to the grave, but even to the throne of God, where, alas! before heaven shut and hell opened, he learns the truth too late.

The conclusion of the whole matter is, that a religion entirely of notions is no religion. The absence of beneficent action attests the absence of everything valuable in life,—the heart has no pulse of affection, and the hands create nothing good. It is only as notions melt into charity and flow out in noble principles, warm and beneficent, that existence becomes a blessing, and God is honored. When a human heart dissolves in penitence and devotion under the mild look of Him who said, "let your light so shine," then does it indeed become a well-spring of life to him that hath it, refreshing to himself and a blessing to all mankind.

The most potent and persuasive harbingers of the Gospel are benevolent deeds, and the best commentary on Christianity is a consistent life. How is that man prepared to exemplify holiness or teach it, who has a false measure, an unequal balance, an intentional error in his cash account, or a malignant purpose in his heart? Let us ever bear in mind that all religious worth consists in doing God's will, and not merely in professing it. Be ye warmed, be ye clothed, be ye fed, be ye kindly treated, are words, not Christian graces;—cold things of indifferent lips, not the holy faith that emanates from the cross.

They who are most like heaven, and appear to be traveling thither with firmest step, with a pure conscience and sincere prayer seek for holy light upon their narrow path; so that, as said old bishop Hall, "we are not scrupulous and nice in small matters, negligent in the main; we are still curious in substantial points, and not careless in things of an inferior nature; accounting no duty so small as to be neglected, and no care great enough for principal duties; not so tithing mint and cummin, that we should forget justice and judgment; nor yet regarding judgment and justice, that we should condemn mint and cummin." Our adorable Saviour, in asserting for our guidance the relative value of fundamental doctrines and decorative graces, rendered the matter clear and the duties of all imperative, in the remarkable words to the scribes and pharisees: "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

## CHAPTER II.

### CAPTIOUSNESS;

#### OR, THE CENSORIOUS MAN.

“GRIEVOUS words stir up anger,” Prov. 15:1. We infer from this language, and from general observation, that the acrimonious words of censorious persons kindle no light in the world except that which gleams from angry flames powerful only to destroy. Of this truth there are but too many sad instances recorded in the word of God, and illustrated within the scope of every observant mind. But in order to render the subject plain and practical to all, we will proceed to show that the censorious man is always ready to find fault; that he complains without sufficient cause; criticises without just discrimination; and, since he is never impelled by generosity, his bickerings can do no permanent good.

In the first place, the censorious man is prompt to complain. It has been said that an Irishman is at peace, only when he is in a quarrel; a Scotchman is at home, only when he is abroad; an Englishman is contented, only while finding fault with something or somebody; and, let us add, that a captious, busy, blustering, impetuous American is at the height of felicity, only while he is in all these tumultuous conditions at the same time. Place of birth and peculiarity of dialect matters not; wherever the graceless cynic throws around him “the rhinoceros skin of impudence,” the identity of his character is fixed, and is very likely to remain unchanged. His misanthropic heart is a fountain of bitterness, whose incessant flow indicates a disposition perpetually perverse. By a few

masterly outlines, the great bard has presented a vivid portraiture of the censorious man. "Thou wilt quarrel with a man that hath a hair more, or a hair less, in his beard, than thou hast. Thou wilt quarrel with a man for cracking nuts, having no other reason but because thou hast hazel eyes: What eye, but such an eye, would spy out such a quarrel? Thy head is as full of quarrels, as an egg is full of meat."

Says Solomon, "An ungodly man diggeth up evil; and in his lips there is a burning fire. A froward man soweth strife; and a whisperer separateth chief friends." Instead of "covering all" in the spirit of the gospel, the captious are most busy in digging up evil; they "search for hid treasure," black and foul as their own loathsome spirit, and take the greatest delight in reviving what had been long buried, only to invest it with aggravating circumstances and a more envenomed life. Such a perturbed and wretched anarchist goes forth with diligent hand to sow the seed of strife in every furrow of society,—seed that spring up only in tempests, and generate the worst pestilence from the rotten fruits they produce.

It is not uncommon for this class of persons to assign good motives for their bad deeds. A divine proverb says, "An hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbor." Haman, under a pretence of loyalty, attempted to destroy a whole nation. Ziba, under the same false garb, would have destroyed his neighbor. Ahab, the lying prophet, from mere wilfulness, ruined his brother. The hypocrite's mouth is "a world of iniquity;" it contains "a little member" always armed and active against true greatness, a weapon fearfully destructive since, as the apostle James declares, it is "set on fire of hell."

To conciliate the censorious is almost impossible. They are usually the most obdurate, because most prejudiced; therefore they are the last to appreciate kindness, and least susceptible to conviction.

"All seems infected that the infected spy,  
And all seems yellow to the jaundiced eye."

The influence of such individuals is well stated in the following Scripture: "The north wind bringeth forth rain: so doth a backbiting tongue an angry countenance." To suppress rage is undoubtedly a duty, but it is a task the hardest to perform in the presence of those who are constantly finding fault. The evil is aggravated by the fact that those who are most tantalizing are always the most unworthy of regard. The most contemptible foes are the most annoying; as Southey has said,

" Quick am I to feel  
Light ills,—perhaps o'erhasty; summer gnats,  
Finding my cheek unguarded, may infix  
Their skin-deep stings, to vex and irritate;  
But if the wolf or forest boar be nigh,  
I am awake to danger. Even so  
Bear I a mind of steel and adamant  
Against all greater wrongs."

Grievous words are the oil which augments the flame of passion and intensifies its heat; for this reason they should be studiously repelled and repressed. Says an old and wise counsellor, "When men are provoked, speak gently to them, and they will be pacified; as the Ephraimites were by Gideon's mildness: whereas, on a like occasion, by Jephtha's roughness they were exasperated, and the consequences were bad. Reason will be better spoken, and a righteous cause better pleaded, with meekness, than with passion; hard arguments do best with soft words."

In the second place, the censorious man usually complains without sufficient cause. In all waters there are some fish that love to swim against the stream; and in every community persons are to be found who delight in being opposed to everybody else. Demand a reason for their obstinate dissent, and you will probably obtain a reply about as intelligent and magnanimous as the one recorded in the following lines:

" I do not like you Doctor Fell,  
The reason why, I cannot tell,  
But—I do not like you Doctor Fell."

It is painful to see persons thus "fretting in their own grease," as anger without reason is like fire under an empty kettle, it burns the vessel to no purpose. Such a frantic member of society is a furious beast in his demeanor towards more worthy associates, because the native impulse is grovelling and bestial which sways himself. It was with a vain hope of correcting this fatal eccentricity, that Burke wrote as follows to his captious friend Barry, while studying his art at Rome, "That you have just subjects of indignation always, and of anger often, I do noways doubt; who can live in the world without some trial of his patience? But believe me, my dear Barry, that the arms with which the ill-dispositions of the world are to be combated, and the qualities by which it is to be reconciled to us, and we reconciled to it, are moderation, gentleness, a little indulgence to others, and a great deal of distrust of ourselves; which are not qualities of a mean spirit, as some may possibly think them, but virtues of a great and noble kind, and such as dignify our nature, as much as they contribute to our repose and fortune; for nothing can be so unworthy of a well-composed soul as to pass away life in bickerings and litigations; in snarling and scuffling with every one about us. Again and again, my dear Barry, we must be at peace with our species, if not for their sakes, yet very much for our own."

Stiff necks are always diseased ones, and trees that are hollow are the most unbending; but their inflexibility is the product and proof of unsoundness rather than of strength. A delicate and flexible demeanor is a prominent trait in polished life. The hostility of the truly great is always marked by courteous generosity; while mediocrity is perpetually envious towards original minds and magnanimous thoughts. The undisciplined harshness and furious invective of such is the exponent of their native meanness and the badge of predestined contempt. Says Schiller, "How should they, who know no other measure of worth than the toil of acquisition and its pal-

pable results, be capable of estimating the calm operation of taste upon the outward and inward man, while they regard the fortuitous disadvantages of polite literature, without its essential benefits. The man without perception of form despises all grace in eloquence as corruption, all elegance in conversation as hypocrisy, all delicacy and loftiness of demeanor as exaggeration and affectation. He can never forgive it in the favorite of the graces, that, as a companion, he adorns all circles, as a man of business, moulds all heads to his designs, as an author, imprints, perhaps, his spirit on the whole of his century, while *he*, the victim of drudgery, with all his knowledge can command no attention, nor move so much as a stone from its place."

The emotion most profoundly experienced by ambitious mediocrity is envy at the success of industrious merit; every word of praise he hears bestowed on the deserving is bewailed as a leaf torn from his own scanty garland. Therefore is he

"Ready in gibes, quick-answer'd, saucy, and  
As quarrellous as the weasel."

Jeffry, the most sagacious of modern critics, has said, "There is nothing so certain, we take it, as that those who are the most alert in discovering the faults of a work of genius, are the least touched with its beauties." This is an important thought, and, to generalize it as a fitting close of this part of our subject, let us add, that those who most admire and appreciate excellence of all kinds, are a much nobler class of persons than those who are the keenest to detect flaws and the most boisterous in exaggerating defects.

Thirdly, the censorious man criticises without discrimination, and therefore is certain to condemn without justice. Censoriousness is a compound of many of the worst passions; latent pride, which discovers the mote in our brother's eye, but hides the beam in our own; malignant envy, which, wounded at the

noble talents and superior prosperity of others, transforms them into the objects and food of its malice, if possible obscuring the splendor it is too base to emulate; disguised hatred, which diffuses, in its perpetual mutterings, the irritable venom of the heart; servile duplicity, which fulsomely praises to the face, and blackens behind the back; shameless levity, which sacrifices the peace and reputation of the absent, merely to give barbarous stings to a jocular conversation; all together forming an aggregate the most desolating on earth, and nearest in character to the malice of hell. "The tongue of the slanderer," says Massillon, "is a devouring fire, which tarnishes whatever it touches; which exercises its fury on the good grain, equally as on the chaff; on the profane, as on the sacred; which wherever it passes, leaves only desolation and ruin; digs even into the bowels of the earth, and fixes itself on things the most hidden; turns into vile ashes, what, only a moment before, had appeared to us so precious and brilliant; acts with more violence and danger than ever, in the time when it was apparently smothered up and almost extinct; which blackens what it cannot consume, and sometimes sparkles and delights before it destroys."

For many years past, the habitual tone of British critics in regard to this country, has been of the most unmanly and ungenerous character. The true occasion of all this detraction, falsehood and abuse is well understood by observing and sagacious citizens. Our nation, by the act of God and the virtuous zeal of our fathers, without any merit or demerit of our own, has been placed in such a situation, political, geographical, and statistical, as to make us more likely than any other power to rival or surpass Great Britain in commercial pursuits, population, wealth and national greatness. It will not help the matter to deny the facts in the case, nor will the destiny of our republic be arrested by the malignity of her foes. A distinguished writer in the North American Review, touching this matter, inquires, "Is the petulant and



peevish spirit, which they regularly show in regard to this subject, such a one as we should naturally expect from a great and gallant nation, that still maintains, though in the wane of her fortunes, a lofty standing among the leading powers of the world? Is it not more like the petty spite of a faded beauty, who would gladly if she dared, tear out the eyes of a younger rival, because that she feels that their lustre eclipses that of her own?"

But unjustifiable detraction always proves the weakness as well as meanness of the party that employs it. To be constantly carping at, and exaggerating petty blemishes in the characters of others, putting an unfavorable construction on their language, or "damning with faint praise" their deeds, betrays on the part of the detractor a conscious inability to maintain a reputable standing on legitimate and honorable grounds. The course pursued proves him to be a sour, surly, mean-spirited creature, and we may at once conclude that he is a man disappointed and broken-down. He belongs to the miserable race whose special vocation it is to "murder fame,"—loathsome leeches on the body politic, or ferocious vampire-bats, that mutilate all the pure things they can reach, and corrode with their poisonous slime everything they do not speedily destroy. In every social organization, it may be expected that there will be at least one of these, who, to use the expressive language of the poet—

"Devotes to scandal his congenial mind,  
Himself a living libel on mankind."

Says the wise man, "It is as sport to a fool to do mischief." It is not uncommon to find persons so wanton in heart and judgment as to be willing to indulge in mischievous jokes which inflict on a neighbor the severest pain. They will perpetrate a bitter jest, though by it they sacrifice a friend and create a foe. Like the anxious wife in the poet's story, the censorious person will pertinaciously "nurse his wrath to

keep it warm," and seek a place in all companies only to exasperate ill feelings and augment the tide of vituperation. They are the stubborn sort,

" Who, if they once grow fond of an opinion,  
They call it honor, honesty, and faith,  
And sooner part with life than let it go."

The perpetual complaints of such, to use the simile of an old writer, "are like unto a new cart, which screams and cries, even whilst it had no burden but its own wheels, whereas that which is long used, and well liquored, goes silently away with an heavy load."

Canting bigotry and carping criticism are usually the product of obtuse sensibilities and a pusillanimous will. Plutarch tells us of an idle and effeminate Etrurian, who found fault with the manner in which Themistocles had conducted a recent campaign. "What," said the hero in reply, "have you, too, something to say about war, who are like the fish that has a sword, but no heart." He is always the severest censor on the merits of others, who has the least worth of his own. For the want of deep and sincere emotion, hypocrites are necessarily poor orators, and they are always ready to accuse successful speakers of employing more art than themselves, whereas those whom they malign have only a more exalted and active soul within them. The lethargic calumniator, too stupid to coin refined and enthusiastic sentiment, is powerful only in the exercise of brutal force. But once invade the contracted sphere wherein his belligerent passions lie ambushed ever ready to spring upon the unguarded victim, and you are attacked with a fury as sudden and boisterous as it is undeserved.

" He speaks plain cannon, fire and smoke, and bounce,  
He gives the bastinado with his tongue;  
Our ears are cudgel'd; not a word of his,  
But buffets better than a fist of France;

Zounds ! I was never so bethump'd with words,  
Since I first call'd my brother's father, dad."

But "affronts are innocent, when men are worthless," and inveterate fault-finders are the objects not so much of hate as of commiseration, on the ground that he who can please nobody, is not so much to be pitied, as he whom nobody can please.

The Sandwich Islanders murdered Captain Cook, but adored his bones. It is after the same manner that the censorious treat deserving men. They first immolate them in the most savage mode of sacrifice, and then declare the relics of their victim to be sacred. Crabbed members of churches and other societies will quarrel a pastor or leading member away, and then with snappish tone will complain of his absence, invidiously comparing him with his successor, and making the change they have caused the occasion of a still keener fight, simply to indulge the unslumbering malice of their unfeeling heart. The rancor with which they would silence one, the envy with which they hurry another into seclusion, and the inexorable bitterness under the corrosion of which a third is brought prematurely to the grave, proves how indiscriminate are their carping comments, and how identical towards all degrees of merit is their infernal hate.

A moral being of the highest and purest cast will forfeit none of his dignity by occasionally forging the shafts of satire ; but he will be studious to increase the polish of his weapon in exact proportion to the keenness of its point and the velocity of its flight. Men who find fault on grounds of good taste and just principle are not such as are described in the following extract from the *Course of Time* :

" The critics—some, but few,  
Were worthy men: and earned renown which had  
Immortal roots; but most were weak and vile:  
And as a cloudy swarm of summer flies,  
With angry hum and slender lance, beset

The sides of some huge animal ; so did  
 They buzz about the illustrious man, and fain  
 With his immortal honor, down the stream  
 Of fame would have descended ; but alas !  
 The hand of Time drove them away : they were,  
 Indeed a simple race of men, who had  
 One only art, which taught them still to say—  
 Whate'er was done, might have been better done—  
 And with this art, not ill to learn, they made  
 A shift to live : but sometimes too, beneath  
 The dust they raised, was worth awhile obscured :  
 And then did Envy prophesy and laugh.  
 O Envy ! hide thy bosom ! hide it deep :  
 A thousand snakes, with black envenomed mouths,  
 Nest there, and hiss, and feed thro' all thy heart !”

The manner in which cynical censors of artistic and moral worth proceed is the same in every place and age. In Pope's time, “coxcombs” attempted to “vanquish Berkely with a grin,” and they would fain do the same to-day. “Is not this common ?” exclaimed a renowned musician, “The least little critic, in reviewing some work of art, will say, ‘Pity this, and pity that ; this should have been altered, that omitted.’ Yea, with his wiry fiddle-string will he creak out his accursed variations. But let him sit down and compose himself. He sees no improvement in variations *then* !”

The industrious honey-bee is armed with a sting as well as the wasp ; but the former delights in collecting rich treasures from every field, and wounds only in self-defence, while the useless and malignant wasp buzzes about perpetually but to no profit, and darts at the most delicious fruits only to pierce them to the core. “It was not only in the Roman customs,” said Burke, kindled to indignation under the wrongs that had been heaped upon him, “it was not only in the Roman customs, but it is in the nature and constitution of things, that calumny and abuse are essential parts of triumph.” But however disagreeable such inflictions may be to a rugged and noble sufferer, he will never succumb to them. Ungenerous

detraction serves only to exasperate the passionate, and substantiate the energies of the intrinsically strong. It renders the firm firmer, and prompts him to yet higher deeds. A true man is not to be intimidated by hyper-criticism, as if, in the words of Byron,

"The sublime ethereal particle  
Could be extinguished by an article."

Let us learn, under all circumstances of irritating abuse to be mercifully and calmly self-possessed. An old proverb says truly, "If thou art vexed, thou wilt have two troubles." Cheerful looks, kind words and a speedy pardon are the best revenge we can inflict on the ungenerous and unjust.

"What's honor?  
Not to be captious; ner unjustly fight;  
'Tis to confess what's wrong and do what's right."

In the fourth place, we remark that, since the censorious man is never impelled by generosity, his bickerings can do no permanent good. Voltaire said that "the character of the Frenchman is made up of the tiger and the ape;" but even such a composition may be turned to some useful account, while the inveterate fault-finder neutralizes, as far as possible, every attempt made by others to do good. To perform any task perfectly to his liking, would be as impossible as to "make a portrait of Proteus, or fix the figure of the fleeting air." To speak favorably of any body or any thing is a trait of generosity entirely foreign to his nature; from temperament and confirmed habit, he "must be cruel only to be kind." The only benefit he occasions, is achieved contrary to his intent; in his efforts to impede rising merit, he fortifies the energies he would destroy. Said Haydon, "Look down upon genius and he will rise to a giant—attempt to crush him and he will soar to a god."

While the censorious man is most severe in judging others,

he is invariably the most ready to repel any animadversions made upon himself; upon the principle well understood in medical circles, that the feeblest bodies are always the most sensitive. No man will so speedily and violently resent a supposed wrong, as he who is most accustomed to inflict injuries upon his associates. Not unfrequently is a fool as dangerous to deal with as a knave, and forever is he more incorrigible. "When Christian saw that the man was wise in his own conceit, he said to Hopeful, whisperingly, 'there is more hope of a fool than of him;' and said, moreover, 'When he that is a fool walketh by the way, his wisdom faileth him, and he saith to every one that he is a fool.'"

The Pilgrim might have quoted further from Proverbs, to wit, "There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health." Many know well enough how to speak daggers, though they are too cowardly in character to use any weapon more dignified than a slanderous tongue. It is indeed a great calamity, one almost incredible, that man, created in the likeness of the Infinite, and lord of all lesser things, should have become so corrupted, that no savage beast can exceed him in malignant ferocity. But "The wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips." On this Scripture, Henry says, "Many have felt the lash upon their backs for the want of a bridle upon their tongues." Solomon tells us that "A fool's wrath is presently known." You may easily learn how soon it was revealed in Saul's violent attacks upon David and Jonathan; Jezebel's fury against Elijah; and Nebuchadnezzar's passionate decree to kill the wise men, because they could not interpret his vision. Such men are always as unreasonable in their demands, as they are unrelenting in their prejudice. But the most painful exhibition of the fool's wrath is seen in those who profess to be the children of God. Nothing so much excites the contempt of the undevout, as those gross ebullitions of hatred and crimination, which it would seem divine grace ought to restrain.

"To wilful men,  
The injuries, that they themselves procure,  
Must be their schoolmasters."

But, unfortunately, experience is lost upon the confirmed fault-finder; he is not to be corrected by the blunders he has committed, and the lessons he has been taught. We learn from the highest source that "A reproof entereth more into a wise man, than an hundred stripes into a fool." A single word was sufficient to correct David. A look entered more into Peter's heart than an hundred stripes into Pharaoh. But the censorious man is, in his own estimation, above being taught, and therefore remains stubbornly a fool in spite of every kind of instruction. "Though thou shouldst bray him in a mortar among wheat in a pestle, yet shall not his foolishness depart from him."

Illustrious examples teach us how to demean ourselves while suffering under oppressive wrongs. When Demosthenes was unjustly accused, he replied, "I will not strive with thee in this kind of fighting, in which he that is overcome is the better man." Xenophon, under like circumstances, said to his ungenerous foe, "You have learned how to reproach, and I have learned how to bear reproach." But the most pertinent and valuable lesson for us on this subject, is presented in the conduct and instruction of Jesus Christ. The Pharisees, who had just been poisoning the minds of the people with bitter animosity against the Redeemer, had now come to profess themselves his disciples. "But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men." He knew that the censorious hypocrite is the most treacherous creature one can deal with, since under the mask of professed esteem, he conceals the most envenomed weapons, and is ready to conduct his victim to the most cruel death.

One of the finest expressions in the world, is in the seventeenth chapter of Proverbs. "He that covereth a transgression *seeketh love*; but he that repeateth a matter separateth

very friends." In what a delightful communion with God does that man live who habitually seeketh love! With the same mantle thrown over him from the cross—with the same act of amnesty, by which he hopes to be saved—injuries the most unprovoked, and transgressions the most aggravated, are covered in eternal forgetfulness.

On the contrary, the censorious man often separates intimate friends by repeating a matter and digging up forgotten quarrels. The charity which is most divine is that which hides a multitude of faults. It is pure in itself, and labors to promote the peace and happiness of all. If one would be noble, he must be habitual in the cultivation of lofty principle and generous love. Instead of perpetually satirizing, let him sometimes deign to inquire; in the place of sardonic derision, let the pusillanimous blockhead have the magnanimity, for once at least, to examine. This, it is true, would not be in keeping with his character; for the moment the cynical fault-finder performs a dignified and beneficent deed of his own, he thereby elevates himself above his native degradation and destroys his moral identity. Such persons always seek more to baffle the good, than to adore the truth; they can never consent to exemplify the divinity of peaceful virtue, but, like salamanders, are in a congenial element only while they are in the fire.



## CHAPTER III.

### KINDNESS;

#### OR, THE HERO WHO BEST CONQUERS.

"A soft answer turneth away wrath," Prov. 15: 1. The force of this proverb will be more clearly understood, by comparing it with one or two other passages of divine wisdom. In Prov. 25: 15, it is said, "By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone." In the text, we have a general rule for gentleness; but in the proverb last quoted there is an extreme case presented—an angry prince exercising absolute power—and herein it is declared that kind forbearance will have the mightiest power to persuade. It was in this way that David wrought upon and subdued Saul's enraged temper, and "the meekness of wisdom" is always the most potent instrument of conquest.

In reproof Jehovah showed what he could do in "the strong wind and earthquake." But his most effective rebuke was in the "still small voice"—without violence—keen, yet tender. The soft member breaking the hard bone seems paradoxical, but the Scripture before us is but a literal statement of the power of gentleness over obdurate hearts and exasperated minds. Soft and conciliating words achieve a double victory—over ourselves, and over the most outraged among our brother men.

To establish the above doctrine, we will proceed to show that kindness is the greatest strength; that it exerts the strongest influence; does the most good; and receives the brightest reward.

In the first place, kindness is the element of greatest power in man. Almost all the delightful words in our language which link our heart and its tenderest associations with home and everything that is dear in the sweet charities of social life, have the same root and family resemblance—kin, kind, kindred, kindness.

Great talents may command admiration, the offering of the intellect; but the qualities of the heart can alone excite affection, the tribute and glory of the heart. Manly natures that are the sternest, when great emergencies demand the exercise of superior strength, are usually invested with the gentlest affections; as the softest down is found upon the breast of eagles.

“Courtiers as free, as debonair, unarm’d,  
As bending angels; that’s their fame in peace:  
But when they would seem soldiers, they have galls,  
Good arms, strong joints, true swords, and Jove’s accord,  
Nothing so full of heart.”

Eros was the embodiment of the idea of *love*, as held by the ancients. They represented her, sitting on a lion, *strength*, which monarch of the wilderness she guides with a silken cord, *moderation*. The lesson is not altogether pagan which teaches us that the gentleness of the weak can control the passions of the most strong. “The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.” On the contrary, “soft pity enters at an iron gate,” and exerts the greatest strength in every gloomy retreat of penury and despair. The true disciple of our holy religion carries with him in every walk warmth as well as light, in wisely blended and gently beaming influences, which render him as welcome as he is powerful everywhere.

“His dream of light,  
From morn till night,  
Is Love—still Love.”

In the second place, kindness exerts the strongest influence on earth. The most prominent enactment in the great code designed by the Creator for the rule of the universe is the royal law of affection. No eloquence is so efficient as the mildness of a good heart. The drops that fall gently upon the corn ripen and fill the ear; but violent storms beat down the growing crop, and desolate the field.

“O, it is excellent  
To have a giant's strength; but it is tyrannous  
To use it like a giant.”

A kind and accommodating spirit is the fairest trait in the most exalted type of character. Once two goats met on a bridge which was too narrow to allow them either to pass each other or to return, in which difficulty one of the goats lay down that the other might pass over him. That great and good man, Mr. Cecil, has very justly pronounced the courteous and accommodating goat a much finer gentleman than lord Chesterfield.

Benevolence is an universal language, promptly read and easily comprehended by all; it is the vernacular of heaven, and needs to be more widely inculcated in practical exemplification on earth. Says bishop Hall, “We should not draw a sword to kill flies, nor call for scorpions when a rod is too much.” Gentle warmth opens the pores of our body sooner than an intense heat. The wild rose of the wilderness, and its kindred flower more delicately nurtured in our gardens shut themselves up alike when the sun retires and the chilling damps of night approach; they were made to expand only to the light of morning, the genial influences of day, and no fierce storms of rain or hail can force them open. Flint and marble sometimes appear to weep, but it is only in mild weather. The light and heat of sincere emotion go most directly to the heart, and produce the most ennobling effects. The blandishments of benevolence expand the soul as well as beautify it;

they furnish the strongest wings to sustain hope, and the most vigorous aliment to support toil.

An unsanctified temper is a fruitful source of error, and a mighty impediment to truth. Kindness is ever nobler than revenge. We are never more successful in beneficent toil, than when moved by "the cool and temperate wind of grace." A Spanish proverb counsels us to "Grow angry slowly, for if there be cause, time will not fail thee to become so." But the direction of infinite wisdom is, not to be in anger at all. Whatever excellence it is possible for us to attain in respect to moral worth, is won by freeing ourselves from gross indulgence and violent passion. The Egyptian sphinx is an allegorical representation of this truth; in it the head of a woman grows forth and rests on a body composed of parts of different animals, mingled with each other. This signifies that humanity—here represented by a woman—must by its own effort emerge from the despotism of animal desires.

When stone and steel meet, fire is elicited; but "a soft answer turneth away wrath." The experience of a distinguished physician is pertinent to this point. Says he, "Kind words being dropped incessantly, at length vivify the petrified features; the statue, so to say, begins to smile, and speaks and laughs, and then bounds across the green-sward with his children at play, metamorphosed into a happy man." There are plenty of deserving objects which demand the fullest exercise of our beneficent regards. In our own great city, how many there are whose bitter experience is not unlike that of Moffat, as described in his wanderings in Africa. "We continued our slow and silent march. The tongue cleaving to the roof of the mouth from thirst, made conversation extremely difficult. At last, we reached the long wished for water-fall; but it was too late to ascend the hill. We laid our heads on our saddles. The last sound we heard was the distant roar of the lion; but we were too much exhausted to feel anything like fear. Sleep came to our relief, and it seemed made up of

scenes the most lovely. I felt as if engaged in roving among ambrosial bowers, hearing sounds of music, as if from angels' harps. I seemed to pass from stream to stream, in which I bathed, and slaked my thirst at many a crystal fount flowing from golden mountains enriched with living green. These pleasures continued till morning, when we awoke speechless with thirst, our eyes enflamed, and our whole frames burning like a coal." And so do many wretched sons of poverty and vice among us sleep their fitful slumbers of dreamy pleasure, only to awake encompassed with squalid miseries the most dire. But a little discriminating kindness may discover splendid gems of intellect in the crowded dens of misfortune, and rescue them for the noblest use. It is better to sow a young heart with generous deeds than a field with corn, since the heart's harvest is perpetual.

It was by "the meekness of wisdom" that Gideon melted the frowardness of the men of Ephraim; Abigail restrained David's hands from blood; and Daniel stood fearless before the mighty monarch of Babylon. Because their lips knew what was acceptable, and their demeanor was wisely conciliating in the presence of the passionate, God honored them. The lovely and beloved disciple, when he leaned on the bosom of the great Redeemer, felt nothing there but the throbbings of gentleness, tenderness and love. The epitome of all that Jesus taught is, if you would be mighty, be kind. The secret of this superior strength consists in the principle that kindness is happy, and makes happy. It infuses the greatest energy into both body and soul, and creates that spirit of self-abandonment to the general good which annihilates selfish considerations and binds all classes in the bonds of peaceful and holy brotherhood.

Our third remark is, that kindness does the most good. Not unfrequently more depends upon the manner of bestowing a favor, than upon the favor itself. The warm hand, melting eye, and soothing tones of friendliness are often the

best portion of a gift. One tender look, one generous expression, may create a feeling of cordiality, a tide of happiness, that will circulate instantaneously throughout the greatest multitude. It is thus that good will creates good will, and mankind even here on earth are made to feel the might and mystery of that tie which is destined to bind all pure souls together in the bliss of heaven.

We are to contemplate hardened sinners and wilful apostates, as Christian and Hopeful, when passing through Vanity Fair did, with gushing tears and prayerful hearts. The spirit of wise lenity is always most successful in reclaiming the wandering, in confirming the timorous, and in elevating the fallen. The advice which lord Chatham gave parliament respecting the American colonists in revolt against oppression was judicious, and is always appropriate in cases where conciliation is a duty, and will best pave the way for peace.

"Be to their faults a little blind,  
Be to their virtues very kind."

The maddest inmates of Bedlam are often guided back to sanity, to a higher and more intellectual morality, by the aid of happy associations kindled in the dark and dreary chambers of the dilapidated mind through the medium of gentle treatment. Criminals, if capable of being redeemed through any means, will be most likely to become virtuous and useful by having given to them some appropriate employment to think on and enjoy.

Many people talk like an angel, but do nothing in the way of practical relief. Their presence casts a sombre hue over the soul of the unfortunate, like thick clouds which "darken the dark of the sea." But this is not the most effective and divine mode of dealing with those who have waged with fortune an unequal war. The statue of Memnon in Egypt was symbolical of a great truth. It was made of marble, its face turned towards the rising sun, and gave forth lovely sounds

when the first genial rays fell upon it. So man is dead, his heart is mute, until the light of heavenly kindness awakens in him the melody of gratitude divine.

To pour balm and oil on the erring and disconsolate, would be more certain to correct their faults and encourage their virtues, than to apply the remedies of iron and fire. It is better to trust to the redeeming power of charity than to the energies of wrath. The best policy in the world would be to substitute the cross of Christ and the panoply of Christian benevolence in the place of unfeeling coercion and dungeon glooms. Nothing keeps bad men bad so much as harsh and cruel treatment; nothing so thoroughly confirms good men in their goodness, and incites them to beneficent deeds, as courteous forbearance and judicious praise.

In this bad world we are constantly meeting with the wretched men who have been "cradled into poverty by wrong." Great tenderness should characterize our treatment of such especially, since their low estate is their misfortune and not their crime.

"For herein fortune shows herself more kind  
Than is her custom: it is still her use,  
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,  
To view with hollow eye, and wrinkled brow  
An age of poverty."

Now, in dealing with all such, "gently to bear, kindly to judge," is the least we can do. Good words are always better than hard blows, and no persons deserve kindness more than such as have suffered most in the storms of life. Sympathy is the balm of friendship and the strongest bond of the best souls. *Suaviter in modo* is often much more efficient than *fortiter in re*. In the language of the great poet,

"Fellowship in woe doth woe assuage,  
As palmers that make short their pilgrimage."

What are the temptations of the rich and prosperous compared with the temptations of the poor and unfortunate? If the latter are treated harshly by man as well as by destiny, it is natural for them to rebel.

“To whom do lions cast their gentle looks?  
Not to the beast that would usurp their den.  
Whose hand is that the forest bear doth lick?  
Not his, that spoils her young before her face.  
Who 'scapes the lurking serpent's mortal sting?  
Not he that sets his foot upon her back.  
The smallest worm will turn, being trodden on;  
And doves will peck, in safeguard of their brood.”

Nothing in the world is cheaper than kindness, and nothing does more good. There is too much of the most degraded animal in man to allow you to kick truth into him. Both food and medicines, when administered scalding hot, will be much more likely to kill the patient than cure him. On the contrary, true mercy is always the most kind to the most weak. Infantile faculties cannot be carried to the heights of knowledge and virtue at once. The feeble must be gently conducted along the ascending path, with new and more cheering prospects unfolding at every step; the pupil of time and probationer for eternity, must be allowed to stop occasionally and gather the sweet and pure flowers that beguile the weariness of the way, till, proceeding from one eminence to another, he at last reaches the crowning summit of intelligence and sanctified joy. Says St. Anselm, “The gardener gives space and freedom to young plants, that they may grow and spread forth their sweet branches, and so should masters provide indulgence for the young, who, by oblation, are planted in the garden of the church, that they may increase and bear fruit to God. They ought not to be cramped and restrained by terrors, threats, and stripes.” Of course this author means that there should be appropriate government, but that the restraint in question should not be arbitrary or fiercely tyranni-



cal. Jesus has taught us how a father pitied the prodigal son when weary of his lusts; and the ineffable God has chosen to reveal his divinity most clearly to man by teaching him to believe in love, to be merciful and sin no more. Therefore, be kind.

The most acute sufferings often arise from causes, which cannot be revealed to our most intimate friend. It requires varied and bitter experience to teach one how easily by rash, inadvertent, and indiscriminate remarks, the tenderest chords of the heart may be cruelly torn. Hannah—knowing her own bitterness—was lacerated with the keenest rebukes from him who ought to have been her comforter. Gehazi harshly repelled the Shunamite, through ignorance of her secret sorrows. Job's professed friends, under the influence of false fidelity and vague misconception, were to the agonized patriarch "miserable comforters—physicians of no value." All persons in like condition might well borrow the words of him who seems to have experienced every emotion and painted every feature of the human soul.

"Your gentleness shall force,  
More than your force moves us to gentleness,  
The truth you speak doth lack some gentleness,  
And time to speak it in; you rub the sore  
When you should bring the plaster."

But "how forcible are right words;" well-timed advice or consolation from sympathetic, though feeble lips! The most stubborn natures are sometimes accessible, and by amiable attentions those who have even the slightest merits will be greatly cheered. A feeble man, who is affectionate and persevering, will accomplish more good than one much more powerfully endowed, but who is uncouth and fractious. The greatest and most beneficent conquests are those which kindness wins. Said Luther, "The word of a brother, pronounced from Holy Scripture in a time of need, carries an inconceiva-

ble weight with it. The Holy Spirit accompanies it, and by it moves and animates the hearts of his people, as their circumstances require. Thus Timothy, and Titus, and Epaphroditus, and the brethren who met St. Paul from Rome, cheered his spirit, however much they might be inferior to him in learning and skill in the word of God. The greatest saints have their time of faintness, when others are stronger than they."

The king in the Gospel invited to the divine feast of his consolations *the poor, the blind, the halt, and the lame*; it would seem that he who was most unfortunate was most beloved. But among ourselves it too often happens that the victims of penury, disease and intemperance are outlawed by their misfortunes, and are left to no other alternative than suicide or the gallows. If kindly treated, they might be induced, through repentance and an honorable career, to exemplify every virtue; but in their idle despondency and blank despair they are sure to give a sad example of every vice.

Fourthly, kindness, which is the greatest strength, which exerts the widest influence, and does the most good, is destined here and hereafter to receive the brightest reward. The actions of faith and mercy are sure to repay the merciful. The highest moral beauty is born of kindness and forever dwells with her. Blessed is the office and labors of him whose delight is in pouring the balm of peaceful counsel upon irritated feelings. They are not the less meritorious for being, as they most often are, of a quiet spirit and modest mien, moving usefully but unostentatiously through the world like "still-est streams watering fairest meadows."

"The quality of mercy is not strain'd:  
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
Upon the place beneath: it is twice bless'd,  
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes:  
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest."

A single kindness has a stronger and more lasting effect

than a thousand misfortunes. This is finely illustrated in the life of Roger Williams. During his early residence at Plymouth, he had often been the guest of the neighboring sachems, whom he treated with habitual and tender regard. Afterwards, when driven from Massachusetts by the cruel intolerance of the whites, he came in winter to the cabin of the chief of Pokanoket for protection. He was welcomed by Massasoit; and, says the historian, "the barbarous heart of Canonicus, the chief of the Narragansetts, loved him as his son to the last gasp." This was the man who established the free State of Rhode Island, the first in the world based on the rights of conscience and intellectual liberty. Under the supervision of this refugee from foreign oppression and colonial persecution, on Nov. 11th, 1641, it was ordered by the whole body of freemen, and "unanimously agreed upon that the government, which this body politic doth attend unto in this island, and the jurisdiction thereof, in favor of our prince, is a Democracie, or popular government; that is to say, it is in the power of the body of freemen orderly assembled, or major part of them, to make or constitute just laws, by which they shall be regulated, and to depute from among themselves such ministers as shall see them faithfully executed between man and man." "It was further ordered, that none be accounted a delinquent for doctrine;" the law for "liberty of conscience was perpetuated." The little community was held together by the bonds of affection and freedom of opinion. Says Bancroft, "benevolence was their rule: they trusted in the power of love to win the victory; and 'the signet for the State' was ordered to be 'a sheafe of arrows' with the motto AMOR VINCET OMNIA."

There is no mode in which we can so readily and perfectly resemble God as in deeds of kindness.

"When a world of men  
Could not prevail with all their oratory,  
Yet hath a woman's kindness overruled."

Napoleon once said, "I win nothing but battles; and Josephine, by her goodness, wins all hearts."

"The mighty heart that battled for the empire of the world,  
And all but won, yet perished in the strife,"

felt the superior grandeur of those virtues which he was yet willing to sacrifice to State policy and vain ambition.

Horace, speaking of Virgil, says, "my friend is to me as my own soul;" what then should be the purity and permanency of Christian affection! Let us remember the rule laid down by Chrysostom: "Have but one enemy—the devil. With him never be reconciled; with thy brother never fall out."

The bosom of true Christianity is the fountain of love inexhaustible and immense; that love which is the summary of the divine law, the life of the believer, the inspiration of everything good in time, the source and substance of eternal joy. It is this which successfully combats the ferocity of bad men, and fortifies the benevolent purposes of the good, modifies tyrannical laws, elevates and transforms degrading customs, produces the generous sentiments of humanity, inspires in the rich compassion for the poor, in the powerful respect for the weak, gives a divine force to tears over misfortunes of every sort, honors the tattered garments of virtuous indigence more than royal purple, sees in calm and heroical suffering a sublime dignity and feels in the exercise of its own goodness the purest and most exalted joys.

Never let us forget the declaration of Scripture, "With the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again." If one closes his ears at the cry of the needy, God will be deaf against the obdurate sinner's cry when he shall be in the greatest need. As saith the holy law, "He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy." The proud and unfeeling wretch who refused to give the miserable a crumb of comfort on earth, was denied a drop of water to cool the pangs of hell.

## CHAPTER IV.

### SOBRIETY;

#### OR, THE GLORY OF YOUNG MEN.

THE Proverb of Solomon asserts that *the glory of young men is their strength*, Prov. 20: 29. The period of youth is the glory of nature, and the healthful development of all the resources of strength deposited in our nature is the glory of youth. But prodigality of native energy is a besetting sin; the wasting of precious vigor in criminal pleasure is a common practice, which this discourse is designed as far as possible to describe and correct.

The grand means by which the highest beauty of mankind is defaced, their energies squandered, and their souls destroyed, is intemperance in eating, drinking, and sensual indulgence. To these three points let us give attention.

In the first place, intemperance in food is a fruitful source of disease, stupidity, and death. Virtuous activity is the law of health. Man must grow up harmoniously and industriously, if he would rise to eminent usefulness, with simultaneous expansion in trunk, branch and foliage, as grows a tree; the sap of immortal energy must circulate in every fibre, maturing fruits perennial and divine. Two laws are manifest in the constitution of man, a due regard to which cannot but conduce to our welfare and elevate our conceptions of the supreme Being. In the first place, in proportion as the physical nature of a man is healthfully developed, by suitable discipline winning the greatest vigor of limb, and the greatest acuteness of sense, he will derive important aids to the intellect and moral powers

from the perfection of his outward frame. Secondly, by a delightful reaction the mind, in proportion as it is invigorated and beautified, gives strength and elegance to the body, and enlarges the sphere of action and enjoyment. These laws have been recognized and observed by the best educators of the world. At Athens, the gymnasia became temples of the graces. They were not merely places of exercise for the young, but drew to their halls, porticos, baths, and groves the most distinguished votaries of every art and science. The field of Olympia was to the Greeks the most sacred enclosure of the gods. The games thereon practised, among other uses, promoted manly education, by teaching that the body has its honors, as well as the mind. They felt that vast importance belongs to physical agility and strength, not only that the intellect may be thus aided in energetic action, but that a firm basis may be laid in a sound body for the exercise of exalted virtues. Without physical vigor, the feeble flickerings of the mind are only "a gilded halo hovering round decay."

Preparatory to those Olympic games, the candidate for the conflict and crown lived in the most frugal manner and accustomed himself to the severest training. He would practise on the course with perpetual strife, and sweat himself thin, that he might be fitted for the great anticipated struggle. Said the apostle Paul, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection;" and, in this allusion to the ancient competitors in the race, he added, "this they do that they may obtain a corruptible crown; but we, an incorruptible."

The use which the Saviour of the world made of the five barley loaves and two small fishes, teaches us that the body is to be fed, not pampered. The text-book of our religion informs us of some who make a god of their belly, and immediately adds, "whose glory is their shame, whose end damnation." The rich glutton in hell has his whole biography written in that single line which tells us that "he fared sumptuously every day." Nature never demands dainties, condiments and

luxuries ; they are sought for only by artificial appetites, and are indulged in only to inflame lust and accelerate the ruin of those who crave the delights of splendid misery.

“Boundless intemperance  
In nature is a tyranny ; it hath been  
Th’ untimely emptying of the happy throne,  
And fall of many kings.”

A pagan youth once said that “he was greater and born to greater things than to be a servant to his body.” He felt, as did Coleridge, that “unless above himself he can erect himself, how poor a thing is man !” Habitual superiority to the gratification of voluptuous appetite is doubtless conducive to health, peace, and longevity. History records that when Athens was desolated by the plague, Socrates escaped, through the frugal and temperate habits of his life. He accustomed himself to a diet generous enough to invigorate health and give success to study in all the branches of philosophy and religion, in the temples, academy, and groves ; but he was not avaricious of those luxuries which reward their votaries with groans, melancholy days, and sickly nights.

The relation of sobriety to mental culture is a topic worthy of especial consideration. Corporeal charms are generally the first to win admiration, but it is only mental ones that can long retain them. But the intellect never acquires dignified and enduring attractions amid scenes of sensual extravagance. “Temperance,” says Jeremy Taylor, “is reason’s girdle, and passion’s bridle ; the strength of the soul, and the foundation of virtue.” It was a maxim with the ancients, that a distended stomach never nourished a sprightly mind ; it was for this reason, probably, that the Cretans, a voluptuous and stupid race, were called *slow-bellies* by St. Paul.

Men whose minds possess the greatest vivacity, penetration, and strength, are usually very abstemious in the use of solid and exciting food. Newton abstained from meat when he wished to study deeply, and lived almost entirely on vegetables.

Michael Angelo, while he was painting his Last Judgment, fed only on bread and fruit ; in Vasari's life of him, it is said that he was so temperate, that he slept but a small portion of the night, and often rose before day to work, so little was he disturbed by the vapors of his thin repasts. He was not one of those who, with all their wealth of natural endowment, wasted in rioting and indolence, at last are compelled to regret that "poisoned hours have bound them up from their own knowledge."

Health has been defined as being "the handle by which we can apprehend and perceive pleasures ; and that sauce which alone makes life delicious." It is indeed an invaluable treasure, absolutely essential to all high intellectual exertion ; but habits of gluttony, with fierce and expeditious ingratitude, soon destroy the boon. It is a sin of sombre dye, and of too general prevalence. Many fine people go to church, pray for health, and then hasten home to gormandize. Their families are stupid and lascivious, and linger out a diseased and useless existence or drop suddenly into the abyss of destruction. Then comes the ostentatious funeral, and lugubrious talk about "the mysterious providence." What is mysterious? That a miserable thing of condiments, jellies, lust and laziness, having violated all the laws of our being, at length ceased its contemptible existence? As well expect a wholesome and prolonged existence, when the lungs are petrified or the heart congealed.

Cicero, in one of his philosophical works, says well, that "We should not have any respect to pleasure, but only to the preservation of our health and strength, in our food, clothes, and other conveniences belonging to the body." The temperate control of inordinate desires is an attribute peculiar to rational creatures. It was long ago remarked by Cato, that "the stomach has no ears ;" but it has a mouth, and Scripture warns us often that this needs to be bridled. The remarks of Bernard are admirably appropriate to this topic. "A prudent mind, devoted to God, ought so to act in its body, as the mas-



ter of a family in his own house. He ought not to suffer his flesh to be, as Solomon expresses it, like a brawling woman, nor any carnal appetite to act like a rebellious servant; but to inure them to obedience and patience. He must not have his senses for his guides, but bring them into subjection and subserviency to reason and religion. He must, by all means, have his house and family so ordered and well disciplined, that he can say to one, Go, and he goeth, and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to his servant the body, Do this, and it doeth what is bid, without murmuring. The body must also be treated with a little hardship, that it may not be disobedient to the mind."

The most thoroughgoing temperance characters ever on earth, were Moses, Elijah, and Jesus Christ. They each fasted forty days and nights without cessation; and these three met gloriously together on Tabor. It is abstinence, and not indulgence, that fits the soul for divine peace and visions of heavenly joy.

The ludicrous remark of Frederic the Great, that "man seems more adapted by nature for a postilion than a philosopher," is not without foundation; and yet there is no necessary incompatibility between great mental activity and habitual good health, provided proper attention be paid to physical culture under the legitimate exercise of organic laws. Neglecting these, the majority of men, in their intellectual character come to be, as Coleridge remarked, "analogous to the physical qualifications of their oriental brethren who superintend the harem."

The Greeks expressed the two duties, *to be sober*, and *to be watchful*, by the same term. Temperance in eating, as well as in drinking, is a cardinal virtue. The great majority of mankind saturate their own death-warrants with their cups, and dig their graves with their teeth. But to pursue such a course is to foreclose the possibility of happiness here or hereafter. Its first requisite is that the body should be free from pain and

the soul from guilt. Wholesome restraint is however too often scorned, and the infatuated victim learns but too truly that "headstrong liberty is lashed with woe." We labor most industriously to make ourselves sick, and seem to be most enamoured of our own destruction.

"As surfeit is the father of much fast,  
So every scope by the immoderate use  
Turns to restraint. Our natures do pursue  
(Like rats that ravin down their proper bane)  
A thirsty evil, and when we drink, we die."

This allusion to intoxicating drinks leads us to the consideration of our second topic. Says Solomon, "Be not among wine-bibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags." "Wine is a mocker: when it goes plausibly in," says old bishop Hall, "no man can imagine how it will rage and tyrannize; he, that receives that traitor within his gates, shall too late complain of surprisal. Like unto that ill spirit, it insinuates sweetly, but in the end it bites like a serpent, and hurts like a cockatrice. Even good Uriah is made drunk: the holiest soul may be overtaken." When one's lips touch the cup of inebriation, they may not become intoxicated at a single draught, but they will grow more and more voracious of the poison which is sure in the end to destroy. George Herbert, in that fine old English poem, "The Temple," thus expresses himself on this subject.

"Shall I, to please another's wine-sprung mind,  
Loose all mine own?  
The drunkard forfeits man, and doth divest  
All worldly right, save what he hath by beast.  
Drink not the poison, which thou canst not tame  
When once it is within thee; but before  
Mayest rule it as thou list, and pour the shame  
Which it would pour on thee, upon the floor.  
It is most just to throw that on the ground,  
Which would throw me there if I keep the round."

Vicious habits everywhere prevail in our country, and among all classes, after the modes described by Cowper.

"Pass where we may, through city or through town,  
Village, or hamlet, of this merry land,  
Though lean and beggar'd, every twentieth pace  
Conducts the unguarded nose to such a whiff  
Of stale debauch, forth issuing from the styes  
That law has licensed, as makes temperance reel.  
There sit, involved and lost in curling clouds  
Of Indian fume, and guzzling deep, the boor,  
The lackey, and the groom: the craftsman there  
Takes a Lethæan leave of all his toil;  
Smith, cobbler, joiner, he that plies the shears,  
And he that kneads the dough; all loud alike,  
All learned, and all drunk.  
Dire is the frequent curse, and its twin sound,  
The cheek-distending oath, not to be praised  
As ornamental, musical, polite,  
Like those which modern senators employ,  
Whose oath is rhetoric, and who swear for fame!"

In Paris, there is a beautiful antique gem, which represents Bacchus as an ardent youth, riding a panther at full leap. How strikingly this teaches that in the cup which intoxicates there is woe, and that the spell-driven victim rides in passionate and inhuman speed to ruin. It is easy to trace the unbroken chain of antecedents and consequents, multiplying into each other and fearfully augmenting their strength as they increase, from the first indulgence to the final and fatal draught.

"The young disease, that must subdue at length  
Grows with their growth, and strengthens with their strength."

When a man invites another to participate with him in the mad hilarity of intemperate festivals, it is but an invitation to divest himself of reason, make a charnel-house of his body, with the additional and special favor of a polite passport of his soul to a certain and frightful doom. Living, such a miserable dupe forfeits every claim to "fair renown," and so, "doubly dying," he must

" Go down  
To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,  
Unwept, unhonored, and unsung."

This subject, like the prophet's roll, is written all over, within and without, with lamentation, mourning, and woe. It is the comprehensive and desolating evil which, like the plague sent up to curse ancient Egypt, has come "upon us, and upon our people, and into our houses, and into our bed-chambers," blasting the whole land with mildew and death. It is sometimes said that when drink is in, wit is out; it would be more correct to say that if wit were not out, alcoholic drinks would never be in. Some persons resort to this stimulant to elicit intellectual power; but no scholar ever sought aid from Bacchus who did not remain in degraded vassalage to his auxiliary. No one except he who is familiar with the depth and dark despair of the infernal pit, can measure the full proportion of this gigantic evil. "Multiply the crime of intoxication into the consequences that follow from it, and you have the sum total of the guilt of a drunken man." When intemperance and gluttony preside at the table, death and impatient demons stand ready for their prey at the door.

It is not very strange, that persons who revel in luxuries under such perils, are blind and indifferent to the cost both pecuniary and immortal. When the ancient pagans feasted their gods, they offered nothing but a ram or a kid; poured a little wine on the altar, and burnt a little frankincense; but when they feasted themselves, they devoured in luxurious rioting, turtles of Liguria, fat Sicilian oxen, and huge goblets of Campanian wine. It is the same among ourselves, a Christian people. We spend comparatively little in charity, or religion; but much in luxury, on our own gratification. The insane folly of such conduct outruns its expense. Gluttons and drunkards are always compelled to return to temperance for sound enjoyment, or never possess it; why will not the fools preserve peace and health by the means to which they

are obliged to resort in efforts to recover them? None but blind and maddened dupes of the devil would thus go on, heaping up wrath against the day of wrath.

Let Christian philanthropists be active in resisting the evils of intemperance. Remember, especially, that no denunciation is so eloquent as the silent influence of a spotless example. "Take the censer of fire in your hands, and go forth into the camp, and stand between the living and the dead, and stay this plague which rages among the people." With the manufacturer and vender of "liquid fire and distilled damnation," to use Robert Hall's definition, deal kindly and honorably, but firmly. We must speak out without equivocation or fear, with constantly increased pungency and force.

"If we have whispered truth,  
Whisper no longer;  
But speak as the thunder doth,  
Sterner and stronger."

Let each one do his, her duty. Gentle entreaties and judicious zeal are never lost even on the most abandoned. Tender recollections of purer days will recur to the erring, and motives to reform will arise in the heart that is kindly drawn by the cords of a man. Under the process of prayerful benevolence,

"Each virtuous mind will wake  
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake.  
The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds  
Another still, and still another spreads;  
Friend, kindred, neighbor, first it will embrace,  
His country next, and next all human race."

We have referred to the effects produced by intemperance in food and inflammatory drinks. We proceed, thirdly, to note some of the disastrous indulgences which are almost always connected with these. Whatever is added to violent pleasure through sensual gratification, must either become food for the worm that never dies, or be torn from the intemperate votary with acutest pain. The shortest life of a debauchee is long

enough to outlast his character, his constitution, and his peace. The martyrs to vice far exceed the martyrs to virtue; but the end of the guilty is shrouded in frightful gloom, and their renown is as transient as it is full of ignominy and contempt. God has written the law, and verified it in all the history of mankind, that *the name of the wicked shall rot*.

The great Anti-trinity that opposes Heaven and destroys our race, is stated in John as *the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life*. Vices grow and flourish most luxuriantly in clusters; they strengthen and impel each other. One carnal indulgence excites and aggravates a kindred vice, until the unhappy victim, lost to all shame and incapable of all self-control, sinks into stupid slumber amid dangers the most imminent; to use the language of Solomon, he is like one *lying down in the midst of the sea, or upon the top of a mast*. No man can reasonably pray for a pure soul and a chaste body, if he lives in the practice of intemperate habits, *making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof*. That which enters his mouth will defile him with more loathsomeness than his disgusting invocations steeped in the rank vapors of animalism can purge away.

All intemperate indulgences, especially narcotics and distilled liquors, destroy self-possession, undermine health, exasperate brutal desires, and render men not only quarrelsome but disgusting. While they excite the physical organs and set them in violent motion, they annihilate the sovereignty of reason, leaving the body to be fitfully impelled by demoniac impulse, and the soul, crushed in its loathsome chains, to contemplate with horror its rapid descent to hell.

“What rein can hold licentious wickedness,  
When down the hill he drives his fierce career?”

Narcotics are diversified in kind and act on different organs with especial force, but they all have the same pernicious effects. Some act on the sympathetic system of nerves, others

on the spinal chord ; opium acts on the brain, and tobacco excites and powerfully vitiates the system generally. Several kinds of the most common and fashionable beverage participate strongly of pernicious tendencies. It is hard to find anywhere, aside from the pure fountains of nature, "the cup that cheers, but not inebriates." All narcotic substances clog the blood with carbon, and thus arrest the healthy action of the nervous system. Every kind of intoxication disturbs the legitimate action of the mind by poisoning the brain, and thus cripples the will whenever it would control the nerves of sense and emotion.

"Inflaming juice, pernicious to mankind,  
Unnerves the limbs, and dulls the noblest mind."

Liebig declares that all artificial stimuli, since they contain more carbon than hydrogen, not only hinder the blood from being properly vitalized in the lungs, but actually combine with the substance of the brain and nerves, so as to alter their character. It is therefore easy to see how that the habitual use of such agents must prove injurious both to body and soul. If their action is long permitted to derange the system, and break up physiological laws,—a code solemn and immutable, like those given on Sinai,—then will a morbid reaction soon follow, full of retribution dreadful to the offender.

The worst habits are always the most imperious ; and those appetites which are at the same time the most degraded and the most voracious, are those which are entirely artificial. "Thanks be to the God of nature," exclaimed Epicurus, "that he hath made that which is necessary to be ready at hand, and easy to be had ; whilst that which cannot be easily obtained is not necessary at all."

Immense harm results to all sorts of sufferers from the want of pure water and fresh air. Rapid and deadly suffocation sometimes occurs, as in the Black-hole of Calcutta ; but the same process in a milder degree frequently goes forward un-

noticed in churches and ball-rooms. Lispering young ladies and masculine drones lounge about on sofas and divans, in close apartments and dignified laziness, oppressed with ennui and patronizing doctors to their hearts' content, little dreaming that they are sinking precisely under the same influences which in unventilated ships and in the unwashed apartments of crowded human dens generate putrid fevers of the most frightful and malignant type.

Diogenes, seated at the luxurious table of his monarch, once said, as he surveyed the dainties before him, "Behold how many things there are that Diogenes does not want." This is true independence; and the highest happiness is possessed by him who can say, with Augustine, "How pleasant it is to be without these pleasures." Intemperance in eating, drinking, and other vicious indulgences, produces results directly opposite to what the epicure foolishly desires; he professes to seek pleasure, but that is a boon vouchsafed to the pure only, and not to the voluptuous. God has declared that *they who serve the beast shall have no rest day nor night*. The sweetness of the honey never can compensate for the bitterness of the sting. Intemperate festivity is one of those sins which Paul affirms to be *manifest, leading before unto judgment*. The motto of the sensualist would most correctly read, Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we must die. Such men suffer the most protracted death in view of the most fearful doom; in life they are lacerated with remorse, as long as conscience can speak, and their death-pillow is lurid with terrific reflections from *the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone*. It is an old story and soon told: the votaries of distilled drinks and voluptuous dishes, saturated with alcohol, bloated with gluttony, and filthy with tobacco, inflame their debauchery to the greatest degree until nature is exhausted, and then, down the gloomy gulf of suicide or the fiery one of delirium tremens, they plunge to eternal death.



## CHAPTER V.

### FRUGALITY;

#### OR, THE BEAUTY OF OLD AGE.

WE have contemplated *the glory of young men*, and we now come to consider *the beauty of old age*. "The beauty of old men is the gray head," says Solomon, Prov. 20: 29. Each period of life has its peculiar honor, the advancing eras growing more and more dignified, until the most majestic beauty of nature stands out to the admiring world crowned with the charms of a venerable and virtuous gray head. Says the same wise preacher, in another proverb, "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." The relation of the proverb now under consideration to the one recently discussed, together with the one just quoted, shows that Solomon designed to teach that *the beauty of the gray head* is found only in the persons of those who consecrated *the strength and glory of youth* to the practice of virtue and the glory of God. To develop and illustrate this doctrine, we will consider the three following propositions.

Advanced years are necessarily accompanied by oppressive infirmities; the greatest evils of old age are strongly mitigated, if not absolutely foreclosed, by virtuous habits in youth; and when, from the outset, purity has marked the progress of an old man's life, the greatest glory will crown its end.

In the first place, advanced years are necessarily accompanied by oppressive infirmities. This is matter of common observation, and requires no proof. The following prophetic lines, which Milton placed in the lips of the angel Michael, in his

mournful interview with fallen Adam, not only foretell the fact and describe its cause, but strikingly describe the condition. The divine messenger unfolds to the sinner some of the temporal consequences of his fall, and proceeds in his discourse thus :

" Thou must outlive  
Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty, which will change  
To wither'd, weak, and gray ; thy senses then  
Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forego,  
To what thou hast ; and for the air of youth,  
Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reign  
A melancholy damp of cold and dry  
To weigh thy spirits down, and last consume  
The balm of life."

But, secondly, the greatest evils that usually afflict old age are strongly mitigated, if not absolutely foreclosed, by virtuous habits in youth. This truth is strikingly exemplified in the persons of those who have been most renowned for mental strength, protracted life, and moral power.

Cicero, in his work on Old Age, says, "Suffer me, on this occasion, my excellent young friends, to acquaint you with the substance of a discourse which was held many years since by that illustrious philosopher Archytas of Tarentum ; as it was related to me in my youth. 'Nature,' says this illustrious sage, 'has not conferred on mankind a more dangerous present than those pleasures which attend the sensual indulgences ; as the passions they excite are too apt to run away with reason, in a lawless and unbridled pursuit of their respective enjoyments.'" Cicero, himself an old man, is here discoursing to youth on temperance, and had just said in respect to his own career, "Thanks to that regular and temperate course of life I have ever lived, I am still capable of taking an active part in these public scenes of business. In fine, he who fills up every hour of his life in such kind of labors and pursuits as those I have mentioned, will insensibly slide into old age without perceiving its arrival ; and his powers, instead of be-

ing suddenly and prematurely extinguished, will gradually decline by the gentle and natural effect of accumulated years."

The great master of the Roman Forum had not the clear revelation of Heaven to beam on his path which we enjoy; but reason and observation taught him that chaste habits and industrious pursuits were the only true basis of happiness. To practise the precepts he gave on this subject, and to live as, in the midst of universal voluptuousness he seems in good measure to have lived, would insure much of that primitive felicity which Pollok described. In his *Course of Time* he refers to those days of industry and innocence, when

"Nature lamented little; undevoured  
By spurious appetites, she found enough,  
Where least was found: with gleanings satisfied,  
Or crumbs, that from the hand of luxury fell;  
Yet seldom these she ate; but ate the bread  
Of her own industry, made sweet by toil;  
And walked in robes that her own hand had spun:  
And slept on down her early rising bought.  
Frugal, and diligent in business, chaste  
And abstinent, she stored for helpless age.  
And keeping in reserve her spring-day health,  
And dawning relishes of life, she drank  
Her evening cup with excellent appetite;  
And saw her eldest sun decline, as fair  
As rose her earliest morn, and pleased as well."

In order to secure to others the most happiness by our benevolence, and guarantee to ourselves the most happiness by cultivated virtue, we should observe Howard's rule, so nobly illustrated by his life, "that our superfluities give way to other men's convenience; that our conveniences give way to other men's necessities; and that even our necessities give way to other men's extremities." By thus striving to disenthral others from abject suffering by means of what we deduct from our own luxurious ease, we win the highest freedom and purest joy to ourselves. "Thou art a slave of slaves,"

said Diogenes to Alexander, "for thou art a slave to those appetites, over which I rule."

Said Coleridge, "the duties which we owe to our own moral being, are the ground and condition of other duties; and to set our nature at strife with itself for a carnal purpose, implies the same sort of prudence, as a priest of Diana would have manifested, who would have proposed to dig up the celebrated charcoal foundation of the mighty temple of Ephesus, in order to furnish fuel for the burnt-offerings on its altars. Truth, Virtue, and Happiness may be distinguished from each other, but cannot be divided." They inhere in each other and subsist by a mutual bond which gives a shadow of divinity to our fallen nature when properly trained under their combined influence. In view of this fact, then,

"Pray that the heavens hold firm  
The walls of thy dear honor; keep unshaked  
That temple, thy fair mind."

Too many persons resemble the strong son of Manoah, who broke the bands imposed by his enemies, but could not break those of his own lusts. He strangled the lion, but was too weak to subdue his own wanton love. The mightiest hero must perish in ignominy as soon as he allows himself to be thus ingloriously seduced. The net of disgrace and destruction will be instantly and inevitably cast over the recumbent form of Mars, the moment he shall consent to lie enervated in the bower of Venus. On the contrary, Achilles in the hands of the Centaur, trained to arms and the course, and soothing his impetuous mind with sweet melody, was but the type of manly dignity and virtuous strength.

Michael is represented, by the great English poet, in the following lines, as foretelling to Adam the greatest evil that would afflict his sinful progeny.

"Judge not what is best  
By pleasure, though to nature seeming meet,

Created, as thou art, to nobler end,  
Holy and pure, conformity divine.  
Those tents thou saw'st so pleasant, were the tents  
Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race  
Who slew his brother; studious they appear  
Of arts that polish life, inventors rare  
Unmindful of their Maker, though his Spirit  
Taught them, but they his gifts acknowledg'd none;  
Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget.  
For that fair female troop thou saw'st, that seem'd  
Of goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,  
Yet empty of all good, wherein consists  
Woman's domestic honor and chief praise;  
Bred only and completed to the taste  
Of lustful appetence, to sing, to dance,  
To dress, and trol the tongue, and roll the eye.  
To these, that sober race of men, whose lives  
Religious titled them the sons of God,  
Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame  
Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles  
Of these fair atheists, and now swim in joy,  
(Erelong to swim at large) and laugh, for which  
The world erelong a world of tears shall weep."

Vigorous health, a robust constitution, and vivacious spirits are valuable possessions; but, as Milton in the above extract suggests, we need to be fortified from on high to resist the frailties and moral poisons incident to depraved beings in a world of sin. We are put into a tabernacle of clay, not to be buried in it, but to be carried about by it, as fire is transported in a vessel of earth, and our salvation depends upon the care with which the sacred flame is preserved. The Romans built the temples of Virtue and Honor close together, to show that the path of purity alone leads to exalted fame. It was Martius who said, "Wisely did the poets determine, when they had subjected all the other gods to the empire of Venus, that neither she nor Cupid should have any jurisdiction over Minerva or the Muses." Beauty, under the fascinating form of Calypso, for a long time enthralled the brave son of Ulysses,

and by the might of her blandishments, held him captive in her island. He vainly imagined that he was adoring a divinity, while he lay ingloriously in the arms of voluptuousness ; but a holier influence invaded him suddenly under the venerable aspect of Mentor ; he is reminded of his better destiny, throws himself into the waves, and is free. To preserve our soul from disgraceful stains, self-violence is frequently required. "A pure conscience is a perpetual feast;" and it is only while we are frugal, temperate and chaste that "good digestion waits on appetite, and health on both."

When one abides continently and frugally in the path of industry and beneficence, the flowers of existence are bright and fragrant to the last. The past sends up no bitter upbraidings ; the present smiles to the pilgrim's reverent gaze, like a child in the face of its father ; and the future throws wide open its portals to his ravished soul. To describe the ennobling influence of such a career, and the happy termination of it, the following lines are most appropriate.

"That life was happy: every day he gave  
Thanks for the fair existence that was his ;  
For a sick fancy made him not her slave,  
To mock him with her phantom miseries.  
No chronic tortures rack'd his aged limb,  
For luxury and sloth had nourish'd none for him.

And I am glad that he has liv'd thus long ;  
And glad that he has gone to his reward ;  
Nor deem that kindly nature did him wrong,  
Softly to disengage the vital cord ;  
When his weak hand grew palsied, and his eye  
Dark with the mists of age, it was his time to die."

This leads us, thirdly, to dwell with especial emphasis on the fact, that when purity has marked from the outset the progress of an old man's life, the greatest glory will crown its end. All valuable productions come forth under circumstances which indicate the measure of their intrinsic worth by the power

which they possess of resisting external evils. Everything has its process of education—dew, sunshine and gentle showers for the fragrant parterre, frosts, storm-winds and thunder-gusts for majestic oaks. Man, too, enters the world a mere bud of being, a germ containing stupendous capabilities, as an acorn contains the expanded tree. His blossoms must unfold, his leaves must spread, and his branches must shoot forth, nourished by free gales and genial sunshine, or rich fruits will never descend therefrom. The artificial appliances of the hot-house are not adapted to this sort of cultivation, but natural elements rather, as they come down from the open heavens, in alternate summer and winter, gentle zephyrs and whirlwinds dire. Temptations are not only the tests of our allegiance to virtue, but, when resisted, they furnish the chief aliment of our noblest strength. The religious games of ancient Olympia had a useful tendency and a high moral aim; they cherished a popular respect for voluntary efforts of manly vigor and the sacrifice of selfish gain. They taught aspiring youth to pass joyfully and with uncorrupted spirit through peril and toil to a goal, where a speedily withering crown was the reward, or rather the symbol of the reward of victory. All the competitors were carefully examined as to their personal worth. Conducted to the foot of the statue of Jupiter, where was a plate of brass containing terrible denunciations against the perjured, they solemnly declared themselves to be free from all infamous and immoral stains, and that they would employ no unfair means in trials of skill. After this, they returned to the stadium and took their stations by lot, and then the herald publicly demanded, “Can any one reproach these athleteæ with having been in bonds, or with leading an irregular life?” This was in times of paganism; how would citizens of Christian lands pass the test?

Said the excellent bishop Leighton, “It is the pure whiteness of the soul to be chaste; to abhor and disdain the swinish puddle of lust, than which there is nothing that doth more de-

base the soul; nothing that more evidently draws it down below itself, and makes it truly brutish." Voluptuous habits speedily bind all the powers of the soul in loathsome vassalage, and exclude every thought except such as relate to the beastly pleasures of which it is the slave. Distracted by cravings as inexorable as they are base, and in their vileness perpetually reproduced,—tantalized by the impure fountains of a diseased imagination, and oppressed with its own effeminacy,—the mind loses its vigor and its productiveness. Every faculty rapidly deteriorates and decays; memory becomes extinguished, industry destroys resolution, and the heart is as cold and callous as a cinder extinct. It ceases to love, to sympathize, and diffuse the delicious tears that sanctify friendship's shrine. The whole countenance assumes an expression of obdurateness and repugnance. The features, marked with premature decay, proclaim that the source of gentle sentiments, pure emotions, and innocent joys, is exhausted, like a limpid fountain invaded by the scoria and flame of a volcano. All the elements of life seem to have retreated into their abused organs only to perish there. Even the organs themselves are withered, and worse than dead; their infirmities, maladies, sufferings, rush in a multitude upon the degraded victim and overwhelm him in awful retribution. It is in vain that the voluptuary hugs the scorpion that consumes him, and attempts to drown his remorse by plunging deeper in his filth. Soon

"The slumber of intemperance subsides,  
And conscience, that undying serpent, calls  
Her venomous brood to their nocturnal task."

Who that has ever contemplated the wretched ruins of a man involved in the miseries of premature old age, can ever forget the disgusting image they present. The cadaverous or bloated countenance, pimpled skin, and blood-shot eyes, cheeks sunken and wan, the whole aspect full of stupid sadness, the frame trembling and bent beneath its load of vice, exhausted



of life, of intellect, and of love, already a hideous prey to dissoluteness, and doomed to a perpetuity of woe.

“The future is dreadful, and the present is spread  
Like a pillow of thorns for his slumberless head.”

At the sight of such, one almost hears the footsteps of grave-diggers and the flappings of vulture-fiends, coming to inter the putrid corpse, and plunge in the caverns of despair the still more hideous soul.

What a dignified and godlike appearance, to be sure, is presented by a group of rational, immortal creatures when, as Thomson says, they

“Set, ardent, in  
For serious drinking. Nor evasion sly,  
Nor sober shift, is to the puking wretch  
Indulg'd apart; but earnest, brimming bowls  
Lave every soul, the table floating round,  
And pavement, faithless to the fuddled fool.  
Thus as they swim in mutual swill, the talk,  
Vociferous at once from twenty tongues,  
Reels fast from theme to theme; from horses, hounds,  
To church or mistress, politics or ghost,  
In endless mazes, intricate, perplex'd.”

And what auspices greet and attend the unfortunate offspring of such bestial creatures, always poor and dependent, forever marked with the infamy of their parents, compelled to drag to their graves the infirmities they have inherited, and content to seek, in dying, a covert from the languishing ills of life.

Persons who start in the race of life under such inauspicious circumstances, are not likely to exhibit either the brightest glory of young men or the noblest beauty of old age. A virtuous youth and frugal manhood always create a Pisgah for the veteran in righteousness, from which he may calmly survey the stars and read his title clear to mansions in the skies. While yet in the flesh he can soar on the wings of meditation above the clouds and catch glimpses of the heavenly world

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that lies in the placid and everlasting orient before him. With noble pride he can say,

“ Though I look old, yet I am strong and lusty :  
For in my youth I never did apply  
Hot and rebellious liquors in my blood ;  
Nor did not with unbashful forehead woo  
The means of weakness and debility ;  
Therefore my age is as a lusty winter,  
Frosty, but kindly.”

The best preventive of matured evils is the practice of that divine virtue that guards against their smallest beginnings. Observing the law of chaste frugality, one verifies in his happy and protracted life the promise of his Bible, “ Even to your old age I am he ; and even to hoar hairs I will carry you, and deliver you.”

On the contrary, while virtue inspires solace in suffering, and is its own best reward, vicious pleasures are full of stinging regrets and prospective remorse. In the language of Solomon, “ I said of laughter, It is mad ; and of mirth, What dost thou ?” The masters of the world’s revels are challenged to produce one fruit of lascivious mirth that is satisfactory to the soul in its more thoughtful moments. How abject is the condition of that man whose highest abilities are made the slaves of his basest powers. The talented Colton, whose intemperate life and violent death was a sad commentary on his own laconics, said, “ When I hear persons gravely affirm that they have made up their minds to forego this or that improper enjoyment, I often think in myself that it would be quite as prudent, if they would also make up their *bodies* as well. He that *strives for the mastery*, must join a well-disciplined body to a well-regulated mind ; for with mind and body, as with man and wife, it often happens that the stronger vessel is ruled by the weaker, although in moral, as in domestic economy, matters are best conducted, where neither of the parties are unreasonable, and where *both* are agreed.”

It requires many prudent cautions to make pleasure safe, but a single neglect of watchfulness will soon render passion fatally inordinate. Thenceforth, impelled by the terrific momentum of combined vices, the circles of hell are rapidly descended, and he who has thus bound himself to the millstone of destruction soon finds the end and reward of his career in the lowest abyss of despair. To prevent all this accumulation of suffering in the decrepitude and diseases of this life, and the infinitely more dreadful doom that awaits the wicked hereafter, one must from the beginning of his physical and mental development strictly regard the laws of virtue. He must be temperate and chaste in all kinds of gratification. In the language of old bishop Hall, "God gives order for competency, not for wantonness; not out of the dainty compositions in Jezebel's kitchen, nor out of the pleasant wines in her cellar, would God provide for Elijah; but the ravens shall bring him plain and homely victuals, and the river shall afford him drink: if we have wherewith to sustain nature, though not to pamper it, we owe thanks to the giver. Ill doth it become a servant of the Highest to be a slave of his palate."

Old age owes a portion of its dignity to the authority it has won from experience, and a still greater degree consists in its proximity to that great future which will soon resolve the eternal destinies of men. Peace of soul beams unobscured from the brow of those devotees of excellence, who have preserved unstained the sacred treasure of moral virginity. Especially is its radiance majestically serene, as a halo of heavenly beams, around the head of old age, when adorned with the attractiveness of frugal virtue, and crowned with the memorials of a beneficent life. The termination of such an earthly sojourn is a repose calm and impressive, but a repose full of sublime vigor, like a mountain relieved against the clear evening sky, and radiant with the sun's richest splendors. The smile of heaven and the sweetest dews descend on brow and bosom, with the assurance that, though the shades of dun

night are gathering round, the glories of a brighter morn will soon succeed. It is in relation to the same subject, that Wordsworth suggests :

“ Rightly is it said  
That Man descends into the Vale of years ;  
Yet have I thought that we might also speak,  
And not presumptuously, I trust, of Age,  
As of a final **EMINENCE**, though bare  
In aspect and forbidding, yet a Point  
On which 't is not impossible to sit  
In awful sovereignty—a place of power—  
A throne.”

An aged man, in whose soul purity and piety constitute the chief springs of action, and whose life therefore has been upright and useful, exercises a mild but potent magistracy upon earth. We instinctively revere him, and without being commanded so to do, we are obedient to his exalted thoughts. In his presence animosities are subdued, passionate desires are calmed, guilt is stricken with compunction, and innocence is fortified with augmented strength. This power of venerable virtue is the more real and praise-worthy, because its control is not ostentatiously exercised. It is spontaneous in its goodness and, like the sun, shines abroad quietly only to bless. It is a power that we approach with involuntary delight ; we consult the venerated patriarch in the atmosphere of his own integrity, and feel ourselves better for honoring him ; we covet his esteem, and the profoundness of our regard for his worth is the best commentary on the text, “the beauty of old men is the gray head.”

Purity of mind and habit is essential to vigor of body, manliness of soul, the greatest force of thought, and the longest duration of life. “A chaste soul,” said Bernard, “is by virtue that which an angel is by nature ; there is more happiness in the chastity of an angel, but there is more of courage in that of a man.” The remark of Cicero on this subject is striking, if we

consider the age and country in which it was made. "This grand law," says he, "differs but a little from the religious institutions of Numa. It requires that one should approach the gods with a pure heart, the central sanctuary of a chaste body ; but we should understand that, if the body is required to be chaste, the soul is vastly superior to the corporeal frame, and therefore has still greater need to be pure ; the stains of the body will of themselves disappear in a few days, or may be washed off by a little water ; but neither time nor the greatest rivers can remove stains from the soul."

It is an interesting fact that Providence allows only such creatures as are pure long to remain among mankind as the objects of their admiration. Corrupt genius, however potent, has never created a lasting work of art that is lascivious in character. The hand of violence or contempt, despite the depraved instincts of the heart, soon consigns such works to oblivion. Paris, Florence, Rome, have no productions of art essentially beautiful, grand or sublime, that are of a nature to create on the cheek of a vestal the slightest blush. Many have attempted lewd subjects, but by the conservative law of God's holy government, such nuisances are speedily driven into darkness and consigned to the worm ; while those masterpieces which illustrate and edify virtue, like truth, live on forever. The virgin mothers and cherubic youth of Murillo and Raphael are heavenly beings on canvas, and will perish only when matter itself must die, and even then the recollection of them will live in the memories of the sanctified as an element of immortal bliss. The group of Laocoon, which sends a thrill of emotion through one's soul years after it was first seen ; Niobe, and her despairing children ; Brutus, with his impressive mien ; the Gladiator, sinking in his own heart's gore ; Apollo, beaming with supernatural glory ; and the exquisite work of Cleomenes, "that bending statue that delights the world ;" are all imperishable, not because they are cut in marble, but because the ideas they embody are divinely pure.

But if sculptured excellence is worthy of admiration, how much more so is living worth. A virtuous and enlightened old man is the noblest object to be contemplated on earth. Says Solomon, "Children's children are the crown of old men ; and the glory of children are their fathers." Priam, venerable in aspect as mount Ida, like the bleached oaks of Gargara, hoary-headed, and seated on his throne in the midst of an august court and his numerous household ; and Plato, in the grove, or on the point of that cape, his favorite seat, where dashed the billows of the sea, bending his broad, venerable brow to teach throngs of youth the nature of God and eternal bliss, were among the ancients specimens of beautiful old age which we should do well to emulate.

When the affections have early been divorced from earth, and the wings of the mind have been accustomed through succeeding years to stretch further and further above the rank vapors of vice, they are prepared, when the ties of earth are sundered, to soar in triumph to the infinite expanse of immortal joys. *As in the ashes lives the wonted fire*, so in the persons of the virtuous, the bright lamp which spiritual purity has kindled never grows dim. Mammon has not prostituted it ; Bacchus has not obscured it ; and though its light expires to our limited vision, it is not extinguished ; angels have raised it to a higher sphere where it forever shines in unclouded day.

## CHAPTER VI.

### TEMPTATION;

#### OR, THE SIMPLETON SNARED.

"A PRUDENT man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself;" says Solomon, "but the simple pass on, and are punished," Prov. 22: 3. This is a comprehensive description of the contrasted character and conduct of the prudent and the indiscreet. The wise avert threatened dangers by avoiding their occasions, while the foolish incur perils needlessly by courting them; one hides himself, by a sagacious foresight, the other plunges to speedy ruin through careless stupidity.

The word *simple*, as it is here employed, will be best understood by observing how it is used elsewhere. In the seventh chapter of Proverbs, Solomon describes the fatal career of him who is betrayed into the ignominious path that leads to the harlot's hell. "And behold," says he, "among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths a young man void of understanding, passing through the street near her corner: and he went the way to her house; as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; till a dart strike through his liver, and knoweth not that it is for his life." Again, the same author says, "The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going. A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident."

From this brief exposition of our proverb, let us proceed to develop more minutely the principles it contains. It is evident that temptation is a common evil, which the wise will

resist; it is a flattering evil, to which the foolish will succumb; when resisted, temptation is a blessing, when yielded to, a curse.

In the first place, temptation is a common evil, which the wise will resist. In a path encompassed by such foes, filled with such perils, as attend our probationary state, the warning of Scripture is most pertinent,—“Walk circumspectly”—scrutinizing your conduct with care—“not as fools, but wise.” We should do this, because we are in .

“A world, where lust of pleasure, grandeur, gold,  
Three demons that divide its realms between them,  
With strokes alternate buffet to and fro  
Man’s restless heart, their sport, their flying ball;  
Till, with the giddy circle, sick and tired,  
It pants for peace, and drops into despair.”

The wise seaman is careful about his “lead, log, and look-out,” three guarantees of safety amid shoals and quicksands. He runs close-reefed in a gale, and has a sharp eye to every lurking ledge or lee-shore; and such a navigator is comparatively safe, while he who slumbers during the watch, or hoists all sails in the tempests, is sure to be wrecked. The strand of life’s sea is strewn with the mutilated thousands who have perished in the whirlpools and on the murderous reefs of temptation. “Tinder is not apter to take fire, wax the impression of the seal, paper the ink, than youth to receive the impression of wickedness.” Hence, says Solomon, “When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee; and put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite.” Diligently consider what weakness is within thee, and what is before thee adapted most powerfully to betray thy feebleness and corrupt thy soul. To put a knife to one’s throat is certainly a severe preventive to indulgence, but the wise man would teach us that it is better to lacerate the body than to murder the soul through the gratification of



lust. This is a lesson which all should remember, because it relates to a peril to which all are exposed.

"No mortal footing treads so firm in virtue,  
As always to abide the slippery path  
Nor deviate with the bias. Some have few,  
But each man has his failing, some defect,  
Wherein to slide temptation."

But this evil, which is so common, the wise will carefully and firmly resist. The more fascinating its form, the stricter will be their precaution. To illustrate this point, take the following interesting fact from the life of Scipio Africanus. During his campaign in Spain, he took New Carthage by storm, at which time a beautiful and noble virgin fled to him for protection; but he, not then twenty-four years old, would not suffer her to come into his sight, for fear of temptation. Without granting audience to his fair petitioner, he caused her to be safely restored to her father; thus acting on the principle that an ounce of preventive is worth a pound of cure.

In the second place, temptation is a flattering evil, to which the foolish are inclined to yield. It is this foe to purity and peace that rules with diversified tyranny over all classes of mankind. Some it arrogantly compels; others it with blandishments beguiles; some it captures by surprise; and others it rules with false shame or slavish fear. But why, under all its forms, is temptation a power so strong? Because it is *congenial with the sinful nature* on which everywhere it acts. "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation," were among the Saviour's last words to his disciples. The heart must be perpetually fortified by wise counsel and high moral principle, or it will inevitably submit to the invasion of the vilest foes. The smallest sin, when indulged, acts the part of a little thief who opens by stealth the doors of the soul to the whole multitude of grosser accomplices.

The solicitations of sin may be compared to the conduct of

Jael,—*she brought forth butter in a lordly dish.* Sin bids high for the soul. It would cheat the dupe of sense into confidence by splendid appearances. But when it has once fascinated and lulled the victim into fatal slumber, the secreted nail and hammer are brought out to complete the deadly work.

“Beware the dancing meteor, faithless guide,  
That leads the lonesome pilgrim wide astray,  
To bogs, and fens, and pits, and certain death.  
Should vicious pleasures take an angel form,  
And at a distance rise by slow degrees,  
Treacherous to wind herself into your heart,  
Stand firm aloof; nor let the gaudy phantom  
Too long allure your gaze, nor tempt your thoughts  
In slavery to sense.”

Says the wise preacher, “Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.” Anciently, the gate, or grand entrance of the city, was the place of counsel and judgment, as well as strength. Our senses are the chief avenues of evil, and they must be guarded well. “The path is smooth that leadeth unto danger,” but the traveller therein will not walk far without a fall. It is hard for the best man to say to what limit he will be tempted. Look at the melancholy scene of David and Achish. If a man will put himself among Philistines, he cannot expect to come forth unharmed. Minds that are filthy are always perfidious, and he that will trust them in any important matter must expect to smart for it. If a covenant is not only made with the senses, but sternly kept, there can be no safety. There are a plenty of treacherous wretches in all ranks of society who delight in causing the pure to degrade themselves to the same mire wherein they are wallowing. But we should trust him in nothing, who makes not a conscience of uprightness in anything; and especially should we shrink with horror from the dastard who would designedly throw temptation in the way of the innocent.

Those who would not for a moment think of madly leaping from a high tower at once, may yet be persuaded to descend step by step. The French have a maxim full of important import: "It is the first step that ruins." The greatest and most fearful results spring from causes apparently the most slight. "Little vermin spoil the vines." Some passion not checked in the bud; some viper not crushed in the egg; some vicious scene revisited with increased delight; the occasions of sensual indulgence sought after with voluptuous avidity; the desire of pleasing carried to extravagance; and corrupt books read with criminal delight;—these are frequently the almost imperceptible sources of ruin which increase their force with alarming speed, and soon become a torrent to inundate and blast the faculties of the soul in irretrievable remorse.

"Take heed!—

There's nought so monstrous but the mind of man  
In some conditions may be brought t' approve;  
Theft, sacrilege, treason, and parricide,  
When flatt'ring opportunity entic'd,  
And desperation drove, have been committed  
By those who once would start to hear them named."

Self-confidence always precedes destruction. "I can take care of myself," says the candidate for speedy and profound contempt. He goes to scenes of vice full of corrupt affections which are in the presence of inflammatory evil what combustibles are to flame. Safe, forsooth! So is a fireman safe at a conflagration, dressed in tinder or gun-cotton. Familiarities indulged on the threshold of sin are sure to conduct to the gloomy despair of the inner prison. Says South, "Man cannot be ruined till he has been made confident *to the contrary*. A traitor must get into his victim's heart with fair speeches and promises, before he can come at it with a dagger." Can you take fire in your bosom, and suffer no harm? Or can you walk upon coals, and your feet not be burned? He who

would escape danger, must avoid the courses that lead to it. He who would avert the woe connected with sin, must prayerfully guard against treacherous temptation. Sin and punishment are never divorced. The fire of lust is the torch of hell, and its flame duration cannot mitigate nor oceans extinguish. Proverbs already quoted describe how flattering speech enchains the youth blindfolded for destruction. He is as unconscious of his coming doom, as the ox that goeth to the slaughter; he has become saturated and stultified with animalism, and as a fool goeth to the stocks, the deluded victim rushes on in mad mirth, till the dart strikes through his liver. Then, perchance, the fatal delusion is broken, the short career of unhallowed pleasure is done, and the eternal night of despair gathers its thick folds of blackness on his soul.

Many a young man comes to town, the hope of his parents, the pride of his friends, and with every prospect of outrunning the fondest expectation in regard to his success. His bosom swells with a noble ambition, and his cheek has never been tinged with the first hue of guilt. But by almost imperceptible degrees his integrity is invaded by the machinations of the destroyer, and the downward course is commenced. He apes the follies of the unworthy in language, life and dress; forgetting the sentiment of the sagacious Lactantius, that "he who imitates the bad cannot be good." Since honest earnings cannot support extravagant habits, some dishonest policy is adopted, to meet the demands of growing vice. Soon his fraudulent practices are detected, and unavoidable disgrace succeeds. In the meantime, the loathsome effects of secret dissoluteness become developed, and popular contempt is prompt to complete the sinner's infamy and seal his doom. What a waste of capacious powers is here; what withering of auspicious hopes; what rending of parental hearts; and what shrieks of horror close the scene! Some early friend of the ruined prodigal, whose integrity has preserved him from a similar fate, as he bends over the grave of the disgraced, and thinks

of those innocent and happy days of youth long departed, might best express his musings in the language of the great English bard,—

“ We were

Two lads, that thought there was no more behind,  
But such a day to-morrow as to-day,  
And to be boy eternal.

We were as twinn'd lambs, that did frisk i' the sun  
And bleat the one at the other: what we changed,  
Was innocence for innocence; we knew not  
The doctrine of ill-doing, no, nor dream'd  
That any did.—But, ah! my noble lord!  
Temptations have since been born to us.”

The most promising youth are often the first to fall into the clutches of the perfidious. “ Rich preys make true men thieves;” and the fairest flowers are crushed with greatest avidity by the powers of darkness. Without soul preservatives to guard against spiritual infections, no one for a moment can be secure. The most frightful monsters infest the loveliest glens, and most refreshing waters. The deadliest vipers creep on the sunniest banks amid sweet flowers, and in an unguarded moment sting the victim who goes forth charmed with the ripple of the wave and the balmy air. The indisposition of man to profit by the disasters of his associates is at once a proof of his depravity and the occasion of his most imminent peril. When a wolf invades a sheep-fold, he does not destroy the whole flock at once; he seizes a single lamb and devours it. Then, when his murderous appetite returns, he seizes another and devours that, and so on to the last, never long satisfied because his appetite for destruction perpetually returns. The foolish flock, frightened for the moment, may soon become calm again, vainly supposing that the destroyer is satiated. Such senseless creatures are the representatives of heedless men; they who think themselves safe in their unguarded state, may be assured that they are already marked as the

bloody monster's prey. His malice knows no bounds, and his murderous industry desires no repose; his eye is that of the serpent, it attracts and fascinates only to destroy.

If satan was found in Paradise, we may expect that he will insinuate himself into the most sacred scenes and associations that remain on earth. His subtlety there prevailed, when Adam preferred the demon's gifts to the favor of God. But whenever he addresses us with the tempting words, "All these things will I give thee;" let us promptly return to him Peter's answer, "Thy silver and thy gold perish with thee." To hesitate a moment is perdition. Pope, in reference to this matter said truly, that "He who deliberates is damned." The hero who slew a thousand Philistines for presuming on the attempt to bind him, allows Delilah deliberately to consult him as to how he can best be bound. "Tell me wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mayest be bound to do thee hurt." As soon as the simpleton begins thus to parley with temptation, he is already snared.

We remark, thirdly, that when temptation is resisted, it is a blessing, when yielded to, a curse. Cecil has remarked that something must be left as a test of the loyalty of the heart—"in Paradise, the Tree: in Israel, a Canaanite: in us, Temptation." The presentation of allurements from the path of duty is not what so much harms us, but the indulgence of them. "'Tis one thing to be tempted, another thing to fall." Christ was most severely besieged by satan without injury. But it needs a soul tempered, purified, and elevated, not by external spells, but by its own internal sublimity and valor, to pass the deceptive den without being decoyed by the malignant foe that lurks within. Our own unholy heart and its lascivious desires is the demon we have most occasion to fear. "Every man is tempted of his own concupiscence," says the apostle James, and against this peril we should seek to be most thoroughly fortified.

Coarse excitement and riotous indulgence always terminate

in the torpid lethargy of a degraded animal existence, and in this lies the spell that weaves the winding-sheet of deathless remorse round the soul while yet on earth. An ancient maxim asserts that "it is a greater miracle not to fall, being among strong temptations, than it is to raise the dead." In God's word it is said, "Keep thee far from a false matter." He that would not defile himself must not touch pitch; he that would not eat meat, must not meddle with the broth; he that would not fall into the pit, must not dance upon its brink; he that would not be shattered by the explosion, must not linger in sport around the fatal magazine. In the Mosaic law, the Nazarite was not only commanded to abstain from wine and strong drink, but also he must not eat grapes, moist or dry, nor anything that is made of the vine-tree; from the kernels even to the husk. Why so, since there is nothing actually intoxicating in these? It was because such luxuries might develop a latent desire for wine,—might stimulate vicious passions, and involve the tempted in sin and death. Frail creatures like ourselves must avoid all the occasions of treacherous allurements; we must beware of slippery places, since we can stand firm only on dry and sacred ground.

The least carnal indulgence is dangerous; as the least spark often kindles a conflagration, and the smallest leak, if continued, will sink the largest ship. No man is a villain, or besotted sinner at once. David was indiscreet and indulgent by slow degrees, before he became an adulterer; Solomon allowed himself to be seduced into secret voluptuousness and splendid misery, before he appeared in public surrounded by lewd persons; Judas surrendered his heart to the love of gold, before he set a price upon Jesus; and the presumption of Peter was the precursor, if not the cause, of his terrible fall. The only palladium of safety is virgin purity of heart and life. We fall into the snares of the devil as readily by harboring noxious principles and vain thoughts, as by the practice of vicious habits. The former is secretly or openly the ground of the

latter. There is a German legend of a man who had resisted all the temptations earth could offer. The demon opened to his gaze the marvels beneath the earth. Trees effulgent with diamond-fruits, pillars of gold, and precious stones. Fountains of water of a million hues, and over all a delicious music instead of air. The tempter succeeded,—envy and extravagant desire were created in the breast that had been calm before.

That is an important caution in the Proverbs, “Enter not into the path of the wicked.” If by chance you are thrown in, escape as soon as possible, and thenceforth, with intenser care, avoid the corrupt neighborhood. Guard against betrayal through the senses. The organs of sight were Samson’s first offenders, and these were the first plucked out and destroyed; the snared champion, made miserably weak, was led to his retribution in Azzah, where he was first captivated and degraded by lust. “Let thine eyes look right on,” saith Scripture,—let not thy vision turn to the right or left to scan the ways of crime, but pursue only the path of purity, since the eye, the *directivæ* faculty of the soul, is often the chief inlet to sin. Had Eve and Lot’s wife kept this command, they would have escaped a fearful doom. Achan was ruined by neglecting this caution; and Paul was greatly prospered by ever observing the holy racer’s rule. “This one thing I do,” withdrawing my look and thought from distracting objects, I press right on, with my eye constantly fixed on the mark. If we would hope to be secure amid temptations, and triumphant over crafty foes, then must we carefully scan every purpose of the heart; we must watch over this central fountain of the soul, as from poison they guard in oriental lands the precious wells.

He that loveth danger shall perish therein; he that chooses not to avoid temptation will soon find himself unable to escape impending woe. Shall a man run into a pest-house and there pray God to preserve him from the plague? The old saying is a true one, “If you would not be found in the devil’s power,



do not be caught in the devil's pound." Says bishop Hall, "He that willingly stands still to catch dangers, tempteth God, instead of trusting him." There is a legend recorded by Tertullian which has at least the merit of teaching an excellent moral. A Christian woman went to the theatre, and came home possessed of a demon. Her confessor, seeking to cast out the evil one, demanded of him how he dared to take possession of a believer, who, by holy baptism, had been redeemed out of his kingdom. The devil showed that he was more knave than fool, and only claimed his rights, by replying: "I have done nothing but what is proper, for I found her on my own territory."

The powers of darkness are busy enough to tempt us; we need not go out of the ways of prudence to tempt them. Eve lost everything by listening to a sermon, but it was preached by the enemy of all good. Often the slightest dereliction from duty is a disaster which no intensity of pleasure can compensate, and no degree of remorse can redeem. Once a Roman soldier was condemned to death for breaking the ranks to steal a bunch of grapes. As he was going to execution, some of his comrades laughed at him, and others were envious, that he should have grapes and they none. "But," replied he, "do not envy me for my bunch of grapes, for you would be loth to have them at the price you see I am compelled to pay."

Our greatest dangers are never clothed in the most repulsive forms. He must be a great fool indeed, who would, with premeditated folly, brave a lion in his own desert, in the very precincts of his bone-strewed den. But the simpleton is no less fatally snared who lingers near the bowers of voluptuous show and glittering crime. Without watchfulness and wise forethought, the victim discovers too late that he has supped from a cup wreathed with false smiles and full of venomous death. Blasphemy is wit, and ribaldry eloquence, to a man thus maddened by lust and degraded to a brute. If the tiger

is to be kept tame, beware of allowing him the first taste of blood. Augustine tells us of a Christian young man, who being induced by his associates to enter the amphitheatre, for a time resolutely kept his eyes closed. At length, a tremendous shout of the spectators induced him to look out on the arena. The instant he caught the sight of gore shed by the gladiators, he seemed to imbibe the ferocious spirit of those around him,—he shouted—he cheered on the combatants—he was possessed with an uncontrollable fury—and when he departed, the desire to return was too irresistible to be withstood. Does not *your* experience prove that human nature has not since changed? It is a sad demonstration of the desperation of our native depravity, that we invent the most of our dangers; we voluntarily incur the risk of perdition for the sake of enjoying the excitement, and court temptation for the pleasure of feeling its force.

But the evils which in a sinful world we necessarily meet, may be rendered a blessing rather than our bane. Temptation is indeed strong, but divine resources are vouchsafed the prayerful so that it may be overcome. We cannot apologise for the ignominy of defeat, by exaggerating the strength and cunning of our foe. The great Deliverer of the devout is stronger than the strong man armed; and He has not only opened the fountain that cleanses from all sin, but will confer on the sanctified an armor impervious to every dart. "He that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not."

Good and evil are placed before us free moral agents, as the objects of our affection, and the formers of our character for time and eternity. As Hercules, in his vision of probation, stood between Virtue and Vice, solicited by both; so must we choose which we will follow. Says an old writer, "The perfect have to pass through the night of the senses, the night of the spirit, the night of the memory, and the night of the will, which four nights represent the four kinds of mortification

which they must endure. Because they are accepted of God—temptation must prove them.”

Such trials are undoubtedly severe to our corrupt and stubborn nature, but they are salutary, and by aid from on high may be safely encountered. Religious resolution, pure and firm, is the grand instrument of triumph. Pyrrhus tempted Fabricius first with an elephant, a greater and more powerful beast than he had ever before seen; the next day he tried to bribe him with gold and promises of honor; but the upright Fabricius replied, “I fear not thy force, and I am too wise for thy fraud.”

“Gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity.” The choicest spirits on earth know not the best strength hidden within them, till temptation calls it forth, and shows them how much, in a righteous conflict, they are able to endure. Every evil we make our slave by subjugation, instead of our tyrant by indulgence, becomes an efficient auxiliary for good. The Sandwich Islander believed that the strength and courage of the enemy he slew, passed into himself; in like manner, but in a nobler sense, we win strength from the temptations we resist.

Perpetual watchfulness is the only guaranty of present purity and eternal joy. The Egyptian hieroglyphic for God, was an eye resting on a sceptre, indicating that he sees and rules all things. “Fear ye not me, saith the Lord, and will ye not tremble at my presence?” Our desires are the feet of the soul, on these we stand or fall. Apostolic practice is the best guide for ourselves. “I keep under my body.” He possesses but little of the dignity of a man, whose heart is led by his senses; and he is still less a Christian, whose senses are not restrained by his heart.

## CHAPTER VII.

### INTEGRITY;

#### OR, THE TRADESMAN PROSPERED.

"THE integrity of the upright shall guide them," Proverbs 11: 3. What Solomon meant by integrity will be easily perceived from various passages hereafter to be adduced. We will arrange the present discussion under the following heads. The integrity of the upright insures safety the most secure; honor the most exalted; profit the most enduring; and rewards the most glorious.

In the first place, strict integrity insures to its possessor the most secure safety. It is not always innocent to be quiet in the possession or pursuit of what in a worldly sense is lawful. Because a man's bed is his own, it does not follow that he is therefore allowed to idle away his precious time thereon; neither will the legality of any branch of business justify a man in the sight of God who destroys body and soul in its intemperate pursuit. Honesty is ever the best policy; the only way to be secure from harm in our pursuits, is to be habitually frugal and upright. Sir Mathew Hale had learned from Solomon, that "a wicked man taketh a gift out of his bosom, to pervert the ways of judgment." But he always repelled such temptations with courteous integrity. A wise and upright conscience will never justify an evil practice. "Honesty needs no disguise nor ornament; be plain." The rules of the Gospel are decisive on this point. Let us not "do evil that good may come. Let not your good be evil spoken of. Ab-

stain from all appearance of evil." Hale was a consistent Christian, in his life proving that he belonged to the

"Salt of the earth, the virtuous few,  
Who season human kind."

He knew well that, however deep in the bosom of the unrighteous his gift might be hid, a day approaches when the great Judge of all will "vindicate his omniscience from all the insults put upon it in the world by those foolish men, who were not ashamed to do those things in the face of God himself, in which they would not have wished the meanest of his creatures to detect them." No sin has a deeper dye of wickedness than bribery, and none is more clearly marked for awful punishment. All the faithful will remember the command given to Abraham, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect."

"Shall we now  
Contaminate our fingers with base bribes?  
And sell the mighty space of our large honors,  
For so much trash as may be grasped thus?  
I'd rather be a dog, and bay the moon,  
Than such a Roman."

But it requires stern integrity and high moral courage to withstand the temptations of worldly policy and selfishness. "To be honest, as this world goes, is to be one picked out of ten thousand." Our will must be conformed to the high principles of immutable justice, or personal integrity cannot be maintained. "He that walketh uprightly walketh surely; but he that perverteth his ways shall be known." All persons must encounter difficulties; to overcome them is the prerogative of the pure and the just. They who enter the furnace in faithfulness to themselves and the highest virtue, shall not miss the form of the fourth in the flames, but shall come forth unharmed; as the Babylonish captives were delivered

through the fire from the infinitely greater calamity of apostasy. For turning aside from the true and safe path, Jacob was chastened to the end of his days, Peter was openly rebuked, Judas and Ananias are left on record, beacons as frightful in their doom as they should be powerful to warn. Man in his best estate is weak, and needs to pray with David, "Let my heart be sound in thy statutes, that I may not be ashamed. I will walk in my integrity; redeem me, and be merciful to me."

Integrity is a lofty virtue, one that is a prime element in every trust-worthy character. Says Solomon, "A faithful witness will not lie; but a false witness will utter lies." A true man is moved neither by smiles nor frowns, neither by pecuniary gain nor personal obloquy, to swerve from truth. He is actuated by the strictest law of verity, and therefore is the man to trust.

"His words are bonds, his oaths are oracles;  
His love sincere, his thoughts immaculate;  
His tears, pure messengers sent from his heart;  
His heart as far from fraud as heaven from earth."

This leads us to remark, secondly, that integrity is the most exalted honor,—a principle which is declared in the following Scripture. "The poor man walking in truth is better than a rich man of a lie." The man of untarnished integrity may, to preserve his innocence, render himself the poorer in this world's goods; but, in the placid delights of an approving conscience, he carries the greatest wealth—"a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets where no crude surfeit reigns." His outward vision may not glut itself on extended estates and glittering displays; but the immortal tenant of his perishable body grows familiar with those unfading treasures held in reserve, and daily surveys them with rapture through "that inner eye which is the bliss of solitude." Perhaps the angels may say of him that,

"His sober wishes never learned to stray,  
But thro' the cool sequestered vale of life  
He held the noiseless tenor of his way ;"

still the suffrages of all pure and exalted spirits would declare that he whose penury resulted from allegiance to truth, bore the highest honor and deserved the brightest reward.

"Honor's a sacred tie—the law of kings,  
The noble mind's distinguishing perfection,  
That aids and strengthens virtue when it meets her,  
And imitates her actions where she is not."

Milton finely stated the duty as well as the honor of integrity, and his life was a noble commentary on his precepts. In the introduction to the second book of his "Reason of Church Government," he says, "Surely to every good and peaceable man, it must in nature needs be a hateful thing, to be the displeaser and molester of thousands ; much better would it like him, doubtless, to be the messenger of gladness and contentment, which is his chief intended business to all mankind, but that they resist and oppose their own true happiness. But when God commands to take the trumpet, and blow a dolorous or a jarring blast, it lies not in man's will what he shall say, or what he shall conceal. \* \* \* This I foresee, that should the church be brought under heavy oppression, and God have given me ability the while to reason against that man that should be the author of so foul a deed, or should she, by blessing from above on the industry and courage of faithful men, change this her distracted estate into better days, without the least furtherance or contribution of those few talents which God at that present had lent me ; I foresee what stories I should hear within myself, all my life after, of discourage and reproach. 'Timorous and ungrateful, the church of God is now again at the foot of her insulting enemies, and thou bewailest ; what matters it for thee or thy bewailing ? When time was, thou couldst not find a syllable of all that thou hast

read or studied, to utter in her behalf. Yet ease and leisure were given thee for thy retired thoughts, out of the sweat of other men. Thou hadst the diligence, the parts, the language of a man, if a vain subject were to be adorned or beautified; but when the cause of God and his church was to be pleaded, for which purpose that tongue was given thee which thou hast, God listened if he could hear thy voice among his zealous servants, but thou wert dumb as a beast; from henceforward be that which thine own brutish silence hath made thee.' \* \* \* But now by this little diligence, mark what a privilege I have gained with good men and saints, to claim my right of lamenting the tribulations of the church, if she should suffer, when others that have ventured nothing for her sake, have not the honor to be admitted mourners. But, if she lift up her drooping head and prosper, among those that have something more than wished her welfare, I have my charter and freehold of rejoicing to me and my heirs.

"Concerning therefore this wayward subject against prelaty, the touching whereof is so distasteful and disquietous to a number of men, as by what hath been said I may deserve of charitable readers to be credited, that neither envy nor gall hath entered me upon this controversy, but the enforcement of conscience only, and a preventive fear lest the omitting of this duty should be against me, when I would store up to myself the good provision of peaceful hours."

In the closing passage of this introduction, he states how, in leaving the quietude of delightful studies to engage in polemical warfare, he was moved only with the purpose to maintain his integrity before God and man. "I trust hereby to make it manifest with what small willingness I endure to interrupt the pursuit of no less hopes than these, and leave a calm and pleasing solitariness, fed with cheerful and confident thoughts, to embark in a troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes, put from beholding the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies. \* \* \* But were



it the meanest underservice, if God by his secretary conscience enjoin it, it were sad for me if I should draw back; for me especially, now when all men offer their aid to help, ease, and lighten the difficult labors of the church, to whose service, by the intentions of my parents and friends I was destined of a child, and in mine own resolutions, till coming to some maturity of years, and perceiving what tyranny had invaded the church, that he who would take orders must subscribe slave, and take an oath withal, which unless he took with a conscience that would retch, he must either strait perjure, or split his faith, I thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before the sacred office of speaking, bought and begun with servitude and forswearing."

This great man soon found the rewards which are often the immediate attendants of fidelity,—poverty, misfortune, and persecution from the worldly great. And yet, said he nobly,

"I argue not  
Against heav'n's hand, or will; nor bate one jot  
Of heart or hope; but still bear up, and steer  
Right onwards."

He had expended time, exhausted health, and, for the time obscured his fame, in faithfulness to the rights of mankind. More painful than all, he had lost his eyesight in the service. In allusion to this calamity, he said to his friend Cyriac,

"What supports me, dost thou ask?  
The conscience, friend, t' have lost them overply'd  
In liberty's defence, my noble task,  
Whereof all Europe rings from side to side.  
This thought might lead me through this world's vain mask  
Content though blind, had I no other guide."

Milton incurred animosities the most bitter, because he would not join the ranks of the powerful in the infliction of tyrannical wrongs. Persecutors never pardon those who re-

use to yield themselves the instruments of persecution. The more pure and exalted the qualities embodied and illustrated in the persons of the beneficent, the more will they be hated by the unjust. But the attacks of such foes should only give the intrinsically great a more vivid consciousness of their merits, and suggest profuse consolations in view of ulterior convictions and an eternal reward. A virtuous magistrate has for the time being no enemy more bitter, than he who has vainly tried to corrupt him; but ungenerous acrimony soon passes away, and a discerning posterity will not mistake as to which was the most deserving character. The righteous Governor of all has told us that while "The wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips, the just shall come out of trouble." Adonijah's deceitful petition did him no permanent good; and the hypocritical loyalty of Daniel's enemies ended in their own discomfiture. On the other hand, the noble integrity of Caleb and Joshua extricated them from the snares which their rebellious brethren had spread for their feet. The contemptible conduct of timeservers may bring them a little temporary gain; but the most enduring reputation and reward belong only to those who are true to the highest interests and the holiest law. Such was Milton, and such was that glorious embodiment of integrity, his Abdiel.

"Faithful found

Among the faithless, faithful only he;  
 Among innumerable false, unmoved,  
 Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,  
 His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;  
 Nor number nor example with him wrought  
 To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind  
 Though single. From amidst them forth he passed  
 Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustained  
 Superior, nor of violence feared aught."

Lying is sometimes acted, insinuated, or implied, in a manner as injurious and shameful as when the falsehood is spoken

outright. Thus Lysias, the chief captain, represented to the governor that he had interposed for Paul from his zeal for a Roman citizen ; when in real truth he was ignorant of the fact at the time, and was about to scourge him as a rebel.

" 'Tis great, 'tis manly to disdain disguise ;  
It shows our spirit, or it proves our strength."

The accuracy of Scripture is verified in every generation. "A righteous man hateth lying ; but a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame." It is not said that the righteous are never guilty of this sin. David lied ; and yet penitently he declared—"I hate and abhor lying." He desired that it might be "removed far from him," and doubtless would have prayed honestly,

"Make my breast  
Transparent as pure crystal, that the world  
Jealous of me, may see the foulest thought  
My heart doth hold."

Peter lied ; but in sorrowful and earnest remembrance of his sin exemplified the happiness of departure from it. "Lying lips" may be common, convenient to our sinful nature, and profitable to the unprincipled ; nevertheless they are "abomination to the Lord," and the righteous man hateth them. He would maintain truth, though he loses worldly gain in the support of his integrity. How unlike this is the character of the avaricious and faithless man.

"Sound him with gold ;  
'T will sink into his venal soul like lead  
Into the deep, and bring up slime, and mud,  
And ooze too, from the bottom, as the lead doth  
With its greased understratum."

True greatness does not consist so much in doing extraordinary things, as in conducting ordinary affairs with a noble

demeanor and from a right motive. It is necessary and most profitable to remember the advice to Titus, "Showing all good fidelity in all things." Christ has taught us that a single eye and a veracious heart will make our way both safe and plain. "The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way; but the folly of fools is deceit." Some translate this latter phrase on this wise—"the arts of deceit engross the polluted minds of the wicked." But base wisdom always proves the most destructive folly in the end. Such was Gehazi's overreaching craftiness; and Daniel's accusers were captured in their own pit. So Macbeth found that,

"We still have judgments here; that we but teach  
 Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return  
 To plague the inventor: This even-handed justice  
 Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice  
 To our own lips."

It appears that in Solomon's day men were accustomed to the same "tricks of trade" as in the nineteenth century Christian people know how to employ. Sharp and shrewd tradesmen in those days had an eye to the main chance, and knew how to strike a close bargain. But it is to be hoped that they were not tormented with such swarms of trifling gadders, as in our polite era on every fair day "go a shopping," simply to display their own finery and weary clerks in showing goods which they never intended to buy. "It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer; but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth." How identical is selfish human nature. Did you never hear the same thing? *It is naught—it is naught*—"The article is of an inferior quality. I can get it cheaper elsewhere. If it is worth so much—yet not to me—I don't particularly care about taking it." And when, having jewed the seller down to the lowest cent by his marked falsehoods, he is gone his way; he boasteth, chuckling over his infamy, and is probably commended for his cleverness.

On the contrary, if the buyer is intent on buying cheap, the seller is equally solicitous to sell at prices unrighteously dear. He asks one price, when he means to take a much lower one if he can get it, and takes advantage of an inexperienced customer to impose on him a worthless article. Augustine records a somewhat ludicrous, but significant story. A mountebank announced, that at the next entertainment he would show to every man present what was in his heart. An immense concourse assembled, and the sagacious cynic redeemed his pledge to the vast assembly by a single sentence—"You all wish to buy cheap and to sell dear," a sentence universally applauded, as each one found the confirming witness in his own bosom.

So it is; if the buyer says—"It is naught—it is naught"—the seller no less eagerly protests—"It is good—the first quality, 'pon my word"—when, as bishop Sanderson says, "neither of both speaketh, either as he thinketh, or as the truth of the thing is. No man's experience would serve him to comprehend, no man's breath to declare, the infinite variety of those more secret and subtle falsehoods, that are daily invented and exercised everywhere under the sun." But such proceedings are not the evidences of integrity.

"The brave do never shun the light;  
Just are their thoughts, and open are their tempers;  
Truly, without disguise, they love or hate;  
Still are they found in the fair face of day,  
And heaven and men are judges of their actions."

The highest honor is forever attached to unswerving honesty, since, as a sacred proverb declares, "The evil bow before the good; and the wicked at the gates of the righteous." For a while, goodness may be abused; and, under the present dispensation, virtue may become temporally eclipsed. But in the end the upright are always honored, and the man of integrity receives the highest reward; as Lazarus, wh

had bowed in anguish at the rich tyrant's gate, at length reposed in Abraham's bosom. Yet, even in this life, is the triumph of persevering integrity frequently displayed. The haughty Egyptians and Jacob's unkind sons bowed before the faithful Joseph. Pharaoh in his pride and his people in all their might were compelled to bow submissively before Moses; Haman before Esther; Saul to David; Jehoram and Naaman before Elisha; the magistrates before the apostles of Christ. Remember, especially, that a scene approaches, when this great truth shall be unfolded before the whole universe. "The upright shall have dominion over the wicked in the morning." The drapery of heaven will unfold, revealing the just government of a righteous God, and then "the saints shall judge the world." Then will it be thoroughly understood that an upright and consistent Christian is indeed "the highest style of man," and that both here and hereafter

"Upon his brow shame is ashamed to sit,  
For 't is a throne where honor may be crown'd  
Sole monarch of the universal earth."

Thirdly, habitually to govern oneself by the law of integrity is to acquire profit the most enduring. It is of the highest importance that we early learn to live in this world with steadfast perseverance in the path of uprightness; exemplifying that strict regularity of movement which alone gives assurance of a soul truly devoted to exalted aims. When a man is deemed uncertain as to his engagements, so much so that his disregard of every promise has become proverbial, it will not be strange if he forfeits all public confidence and speedily sinks under the infamy he has deserved. Every person will say

"He that depends  
Upon your favors, swims with fins of lead,  
And hews down oaks with rushes."

It is the highest glory in a man to be the slave of his word. No one can be fickle and false in little matters, and yet remain influential and trust-worthy in concerns of a higher range. Trifles make up existence, and we cannot maintain an honorable standing a single hour, if in those relations which involve the honor and welfare of others, we presume in the slightest degree to sport with the law of veracity. Losing confidence on this ground, all is lost.

"Lands mortgag'd may return, and more esteem'd;  
But honesty, once pawn'd, is ne'er redeemed."

Property gained through unrighteous means is sure to be of little use to its wicked possessor. With the power of a withering curse will it corrode the heart and hands of the unjust, or speedily revert to those who will with integrity subordinate it to the promotion of exalted ends. "He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor." The sordid idolator of gold, discarding from his covetous soul everything that is "honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report," toils slavishly for wealth, and his harvest at length falls into better hands; as Diodati says, "not intending anything of himself; but it is so done through God's secret Providence." It is elsewhere said in Proverbs, "He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house: but he that hateth gifts shall live." Lot, Achan, Saul, Ahab, Gehazi, Jehoiakim, and the Jews verified this saying in their own painful experience. Look at the ruinous speculations of our own day, and observe how frequently and disastrously the same principle is exemplified.

"Oh cursed love of gold! when for thy sake  
The fool throws up his interest in both worlds;  
First starv'd in this, then damn'd in that to come."

Examples worthy of our imitation are presented in Abra-

ham who refused the gifts of the king of Sodom, and Peter when he repelled the enticement of Simon. The just man will ever cling to his integrity, that on earth he may receive an hundred fold, and, in the world to come, everlasting life. Nobly exclaimed the Marquis of Vico, "Let their money perish with them, that prefer all the world's wealth before one day's communion with Jesus Christ and his despised people."

Let the tradesman who wishes to be permanently prospered remember how God has declared that "Divers weights and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the Lord." All the cheats of underhanded trickery and sharp dealing, the use of unfair measures and evasion of legal duties, taking advantage of the ignorant and unwary, or any other deviations from uprightness are sure in the end to be exposed and to invest their vile dupe with infinite contempt. "Be ye sure your sin will find you out." Ananias and Sapphira vainly endeavored to hide their covetousness under the guise of liberality; and their successors in wickedness will find it equally difficult to hide the evil deeds of 'business life from a heart-searching God.

The persevering industry of dishonest men merits nothing but blame, according to the saying of Chrysostom, "Labor which hath no profit cannot obtain any praise." Such persons are called by our Lord "workers of iniquity;" they will spare no pains, leave nothing unattempted, for satisfying their lusts, and accomplishing their bad designs. Isaiah describes such in these words: "They hatch cockatrice' eggs, and weave the spider's web;" "of which expressions," says Barrow, "one may denote mischievous, the other frivolous diligence in contrivance or execution of naughty or vain designs; and to them both that of the prophet Hosea may be referred: "They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind;" guilt, remorse, and punishment being the consequences of both. And



of them both common experience doth afford very frequent and obvious instances, a great part of human life being taken up with them."

"Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right." The widow of Zarephath was much richer with her scanty fare, than Jezebel in her royal attire; and the poor prophet, who shared her pittance, possessed wealth infinitely better, than the king, with his revenues without right. Job on the dunghill, contrasted with ungodly Ahab on the throne; Lazarus in his rags, compared with Dives in his purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day"—living in splendid misery on earth, only to be more deeply damned—show most impressively how much better is he that walketh uprightly, than he that is perverse in his way.

"Who, lord of millions, trembles for his store,  
And fears to give a farthing to the poor;  
Proclaims that penury will be his fate,  
And, scowling, looks on charity with hate."

The wise preacher tells us that "The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death. The robbery of the wicked shall destroy them, because they refuse to do judgment." God always mingles gall and bitterness with iniquitous gains. Invariably the wages of sin is death. Search your chests; search your hearts; and if you find any of this adulterated treasure among your possessions, away with it. As you love your highest interest, away with it. Else know, that, as Chrysostom well said—"You have locked up a thief in your counting-house, who shall carry away all: and—if ye look not to it the sooner—your soul with it." Treasures obtained through vicious means are "put into a bag with holes," and soon are lost. They are dispersed like dust before the whirlwind. The unprincipled slave of avarice is as mean in spirit as his end is full of remorse. Our countryman Sprague says of such,

"The kindly throbs that other men control,  
Ne'er melt the iron of the miser's soul;  
Thro' life's dark road his sordid way he wends,  
An incarnation of fat dividends."

But what will he do when God shall make inquisition for blood? Judas felt an intolerable curse burning into his soul, and was as eager to get rid of his ill-gotten treasure, as before he had been to gain it. But there was no divorce from torturing conscience. By renouncing integrity, he sought death and was wedded to remorse forever. It is to be greatly lamented, that we are so little inclined to profit by the teachings of heaven and the examples of the bad on earth.

"How oft must men a fate like Milo's mourn,  
Who tore the oak, and by the oak was torn."

Integrity not only insures safety the most secure; honor the most exalted; and profit the most enduring; but, fourthly, it is promised rewards the most glorious.

We are told by the highest authority that, "To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice." That is, outward oblations can never take the place of moral obedience, or the consistent adoration of a truthful soul. It is never allowed to substitute the ceremonials of religion in the place of its substance. Scrupulously to tithe "anise and cummin," to the neglect of the "weightier matters of the law"—judgment, mercy, and faith, is to incur the just indignation of the Most High. Israel abounded in the observance of their religious ritual most, while indulging the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah; but God taught them how much more available is an upright life than sanctimonious hypocrisy. When the Corban sacrifice stands in the place of filial piety and righteous dealing, the foul and presumptuous worshipper will soon feel the wrath of outraged justice. Of the pure, the docile and truly devout, it may be said,

"I've scan'd the actions of his daily life  
With all the industrious malice of a foe;  
And nothing meets mine eyes but deeds of honor."

Such an encomium is deserved only by the unstained devotee at the shrine of integrity, and it is at once the highest praise and best reward man can ever earn.

There is great force in the Scripture which asserts that "Treasures of wickedness profit nothing; but righteousness delivereth from death." What was the profit of Naboth's vineyard to Ahab, when in his "ivory palace" he was withering under the curse of God? What were the "thirty pieces of silver" to him who had obtained them by betraying his Lord, and who, shrouded in flaming remorse, confessed that the accursed pelf was "the price of blood?" A competency honorably earned is the greatest wealth. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." The cheat and villain may seem to outrun his honest neighbor in hoarding emoluments; but to his indescribable horror he will finally learn that the treasures of wickedness are the treasures of eternal wrath. Sad is the condition of such a wretch both for time and eternity.

"Mammon's close-link'd bonds have bound him,  
Self-imposed, and seldom burst;  
Though heaven's waters gush'd around him,  
He would pine with earth's poor thirst."

The summary of this whole theme is embodied in the following proverb: "In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death." The happiest and holiest light, constantly augmented, shines on their path, and when the varied journey of life here below shall end, it blends with the raptures of immortal bliss. The man of pure conscience and upright conduct walks towards the judgment-seat cheerful as the sinless bird, "singing of summer in full-throated ease." He is contented and useful in wakeful toil, and

blest with unwonted joys even in dreams, "when sleep sits dewy on the laborer's eye." The dishonest are accompanied and cheered only by hopes both lying and dying; but the eternal God is the buckler and patron of the upright. They are perpetually invigorated by strength welling up within their loyal hearts, and in every lonely hour are cheered by echoes from beyond the grave. Says an old writer, "Especially those accommodations prove most delightful, which our industry hath procured to us; we looking on them with a special tenderness of affection, as on the children of our endeavor; we being sensible at what costs of care and pain we did purchase them. If a man getteth wealth by fraud or violence, if he riseth to preferment by flattery, detraction, or any bad arts, he can never taste any good savor, or find sound comfort in them; and from what cometh merely by chance, as there is no commendation due, so much satisfaction will not arise. In so many years, wherein Samuel judged Israel, it cannot be but many thousand causes passed his hands, wherein both parties could not possibly be pleased; yet so clear doth he find his heart and hands, that he dare make the grieved part judges of his judgment. A good conscience will make a man undauntedly confident, and dare put him upon any trial; where his own heart strikes him not, it bids him challenge all the world, and take up all comers. How happy a thing is it for man to be his own friend and patron! He needs not to fear foreign broils, that is at peace at home." This is identical with the well known sentiment of the great poet of nature and truth.

"What stronger breastplate than a heart untainted?  
Thrice is he armed, that hath his quarrel just;  
And he but naked though lock'd up in steel,  
Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted."

The honors and rewards which Daniel and Joseph ultimately won by their integrity, are well known. Like causes

will always produce like results, and we should be most anxious to be thus blessed.

"Honor and glory were given to cherish;  
Cherish them, then, though all else should decay;  
Landmarks be these, that are never to perish,  
Stars that will shine on the duskiest day."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### EXTRAVAGANCE;

#### OR, THE SPENDTHRIFT DISGRACED.

THE germ and guiding thought of the following discussion is in Prov. 21: 20, "There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise: but a foolish man spendeth it up." In unfolding this topic, let it be remarked, that extravagance strives most after what the soul least needs; seldom proceeds honorably in acquiring the luxuries it is ambitious to display; is never contented with the splendid misery it may for a moment have attained; and ends in perpetual ruin where it had aspired after transient joys.

In the first place, the extravagant man is most anxious to possess what he has least occasion to use. He is habitually influenced by the allurements of sensuality, and, to secure a present gratification, utterly neglects the claims of the future. He purchases satiety at a dear rate and pays enormous interest to obtain the requisite means. Byron was not the only one who could say,

"In my young days they lent me cash that way,  
Which I found very troublesome to pay."

The improvident generously pays those who indulge his criminal wishes, but leaves the virtuous and industrious unrewarded. Every foolish whim is indulged, and all profitable pursuits are despised. While those who are dependent on the spendthrift are suffering from want, he gives feasts to his idle associates,

and will persist in making them presents when he can no longer pay his own bills.

Those who rely on their own prudent exertions, and properly improve their talents, are under no necessity of suffering either penury or disgrace. On the contrary, the indolent and extravagant will soon exhaust the most ample resources, and involve themselves in the greatest contempt. Saith the preacher, "Much food is in the tillage of the poor ; but there is that is destroyed for want of judgment." The richest soil and most genial clime will be of little value without prudent management and economical tillage. The abundant crops of Egypt sprang mainly from the discretion of Joseph ; and Solomon's prudent administration of his household restrained waste and prevented the evils of extravagance. The prodigal is ruined rather by what he fancifully desires, than by what he really needs ; he goes on buying what he does not want, and very soon wants what he cannot buy. It is for this reason that the possessions of the rich and voluptuous so often change hands. "A wise servant shall have rule over a son that causeth shame : and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren." Many of the most valuable plantations in the Southern States are now owned by those who but a few years ago were simply overseers on the same soil. The arrogant and lascivious heir degrades himself, wastes the inheritance, and, like the prodigal of old, is obliged to take his place among "hired servants," while the frugal and wise come to rule over him.

Secondly, the extravagant man seldom adopts an honorable course of conduct, when he would acquire the luxuries he is ambitious to display. "Moderation," said bishop Hall, "is the centre wherein all, both divine and moral philosophy meet ; the rule of life, the governess of manners, the silken string that runs through the pearl-chain of all virtues, the very ecliptic-line under which reason and religion move without any deviation, and therefore most worthy of our best thoughts, of our

most careful observance." But this is a virtue which the extravagant are the last to cultivate. All the exertions they make exhaust much more than they strengthen ; and so little is the moral energy they possess that it is soon lavished unnecessarily away. They dissipate their strength in superfluous display, and miserably lack all the resources of profitable action.

A maxim with the Greeks was, "nothing to excess." This rule of moderation they adopted as the great law of culture ; but they never forgot that prolific fulness might be restrained without drying it up, and that the excess of energy should be directed, but never crippled. "Moderation is in itself a power, peaceable, regular, constant, and invincible ; a power destined to restrain the energy and activity of the soul within the confines which answer, on one side, to the reach of our faculties, and, on the other, to the objects which are assigned them ; a power which checks us that we may be capable of acting better, and which represses our aberrations, that we may more successfully go on in the right direction. We here meet with one of those dispensations of Providence, which we cannot sufficiently admire : this moderation, which is the secret of virtue, is also the secret of happiness. Sobriety is the first condition even of sensual pleasures. "Use without abusing," is a rule, which comprises all the counsels of prudence. In the external world there is only a given provision of materials for pleasure ; in the internal world, only a certain capacity to receive it ; our desires and fears embrace an indefinite sphere, because they mount on the wings of the imagination, which creates for itself new regions beyond the compass of realities, and renders present enjoyment more keen and exquisite when the spur of desire is still felt ; while, if the shadow of fear appears, we become more strongly attached to what we possess. Reality must be mingled with expectation, and the present live upon the future. Voluntary temperance unites with sensual enjoyments a delicate sentiment, which, arising from the con-



sciousness of our own liberty, heightens its value. We relish pleasure in proportion as we govern it, instead of being governed by it. Hence arise those joys, so innocent, pure, varied, and inexhaustible, which are the privilege of those in mediocrity. Privation continually enhances their enjoyments, because it prevents satiety; every object is of more worth, because of use; everything is fruitful, and nothing burthensome. How remarkable, that the limitations of property should render the enjoyment of it almost infinite!

It is the ambition of the extravagant fop to shoot like a meteor across public observation. He flourishes at places of public resort; he would dazzle for a week, and vainly hopes to be admired for a month. But the utmost that can in such a career be attained is to add one more disgraced name to the idle and puérile instances of prodigal folly. He who recently shone with such apparent splendor soon is without either money or credit, and no longer dares to appear in the open day.

“Dreading that climax of all earthly ills,  
The inflammation of his weekly bills.”

In all things, a lawful and well regulated enjoyment is the best security against excess. “He that needs least is likest the gods,” said Socrates. We multiply happiness, not by increasing our wants, but by restricting them. A sensible old proverb well asserts, “the eyes of other people are the eyes which ruin us.” Necessity soon compels the spendthrift to retrench his expenses or adopt dishonest means for promoting gain. It is easy to see what course he will be likely to pursue, and what consequences he will soon incur. An ounce of preventive is worth a pound of cure. It is easier to extinguish the first extravagant desire, than to restrain the torrent of ungovernable passion that is sure to succeed. But the heedless prodigal practises no such prudent forethought. He is criminally avaricious of indulgence, and is not scrupulous as to the

means he employs to support his extravagance. A small leak is sufficient to sink a great ship, but he makes copious draughts upon whatever capital he may have possessed, and soon verifies the saying, that "they who dainties love shall beggars prove." When one voluntarily expends his money for superfluities, he is not far from being compelled to part with the commodities most necessary for his support.

Says Solomon, "Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished." Frivolous pursuits, hollow amusements, expensive equipage and ostentatious display, will soon prove that "riches certainly make themselves wings and fly away," leaving nothing behind in the hands of the spendthrift but an awful account of abused and perverted blessings. "It is hard for an empty bag to stand upright;" and it is equally impossible for the extravagant long to avert penury and disgrace. If they resort to unhallowed means to replenish the coffers exhausted on their lusts, they but aggravate their offence and augment the fearfulness of their doom. "Hearken also to Solomon," exclaims lord Bacon, "and beware of hasty gathering of riches; He who makes haste to be rich shall not be innocent." The poets feign that when Plutus (which is riches) is sent from Jupiter, he limps, and goes slowly; but when he is sent from Pluto, he runs, and is swift of foot; meaning, that riches gotten by good means and just labor pace slowly; but when they come by the death of others, (as by the course of inheritance, testaments, and the like,) they come tumbling upon a man: but it might be applied likewise to Pluto, taking him for the devil; for when riches come from the devil, (as by fraud and oppression, and unjust means,) they come upon speed. The ways to enrich are many, and most of them foul; parsimony is one of the best, and yet is not innocent; for it withholdeth men from works of liberality and charity."

Poor Richard has told us how that "Pride breakfasted with Plenty, dined with Poverty, and supped with Infamy." The downward course is thus rapid and fatal. "A fat kitchen makes

a lean will;" and "what maintains one vice would bring up two children." It is certainly very foolish to lay out capital in the purchase of repentance, and to indulge in ostentation which must end in remorse. But such is the foolish choice too often made by those who sacrifice to extravagance.

" 'Till household joys  
And comforts cease. This drains our cellar dry,  
And keeps our larder clean ; puts out our fires,  
And introduces hunger, frost, and woe,  
Where peace and hospitality might reign."

In the third place, the extravagant are not only seldom innocent in the means they employ, but are never contented with the splendid misery which for a moment they may have attained. Splendor never can be taken as the type for dignity, nor extravagance for power, any more than a shadow or a reflection can be the correlative of reality. Enough evidence is on record and before our observation if we are wise to read, to prove that the greatest discomfort and keenest tortures of soul often attend the seeming favorites of fortune who recline on those dazzling heights of rank and fashion which to the vulgar eye appear to bask in unclouded sunshine. The chief joy of such is to be the objects of popular admiration around which common mortals gather in awe, "lift their strained eyes and ope their mouth with wonder." To maintain this hollow and glittering outside, they forego all substantial delight; and, that to the last they may gratify their ruling passion, exclaim with Catiline to his associate in a common guilt,

" Let us sink  
In sumptuous ruin, with wonderers round us, wife !  
Our funeral pile shall send up amber smokes ;  
We'll burn in myrrh, or—blood !"

The extravagant, oppressed with anxiety to appear gorgeously, and reproved by conscience on account of the means

usually employed, are necessarily discontented and unhappy. "Bread of deceit is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel." The display of the haughty is but a passing show, momentary sweetness, succeeded by bitter remorse, when the miserable dupe of sensual delight exclaims,—"I tasted but a little honey, and I must die." Everything gotten wrongfully is sure to wreak vengeance on its corrupt possessor in the end. What permanent profit did Gehazi derive from his talents of silver and changes of garments? Integrity is delightful in its beginning, continuance, and end. Sinful show is sometimes sweet for the moment, but always, and often eternally, is it bitter in its final results. The most lonely building in the world is a theatre just after the play is over and the audience is dispersed; and the most miserable beings are those who have recently been revelling in unholy joys. "Next to dressing for a rout or ball, undressing is a woe." Says an old writer, "The bread, which a man hath got by cozenage, seems sweet and pleasant at the first taste of it; but by that time he hath chewed it a little, he shall find it to be but harsh gravel, that crasheth between his teeth, galls his jaws, wounds his tongue, and offends his palate."

The enjoyments most coveted by the extravagant are as unreal as they are unsatisfying.

"So the blue summit of some mountain height,  
Wrapt in gay clouds, deludes the distant sight;  
But as with gazing eyes we draw more near,  
Fades the false scene, and the rough rocks appear."

All the blandishments of unholiness are as deceptive as the mirage in the desert, a delusion that distance creates and near inspection destroys. Many a ruined devotee has miserably experienced in the pursuit of such fleeting follies how "oft expectation fails, and most there where most it promises." And yet, fascinated by what is evidently false and murderous,

like voyagers charmed to inevitable ruin by syren songs, they yield to the blinding ecstasy until on the death-bed,

“ Busy, meddling memory,  
In barbarous succession, musters up  
The past endearments of their softer hours,  
Tenacious of its theme ;”

—reminiscences which are the stings of the serpent and fore-tokeners of unquenchable fire.

The most common and fatal forms of extravagance take the name of fashion. She is supported by the most zealous adherents on earth, and adored at the greatest expense. Both the divinity and her devotees show to what degradation the human mind can stoop, when beings supposed to be rational volunteer with pride and delight to strut through one year and country adorned with the gewgaws of another.

“ Hence ostentation here, with tawdry art,  
Pants for the vulgar praise which fools impart ;  
Here vanity assumes her pert grimace,  
And trims her robe of frieze with copper lace ;  
Here beggar pride defrauds her daily cheer,  
To boast one splendid banquet once a year ;  
The mind still turns where shifting fashion draws,  
Nor weighs the solid worth of self-applause.”

Fashion is a despot to whom nearly all ranks and classes are willing slaves. In London, May-day is the chimney-sweepers' holiday ; when they decorate themselves with flowers, ribbands, and tinsel, and dance in the streets. But at one time capricious fashion came near destroying the sport, as we are told by Jonas Hanway, who on inquiring of a chimney-sweeper's boy, on a May-morning, why he was not enjoying himself, like the rest of his fraternity, received the reply—“ Because master says it an't genteel !” Such revolutions of sentiment are often produced by the fickle goddess. Said John Foster, “ It is very amusing to observe the captivity to

the principle of imitation on so vast a scale as it is displayed in a great city. It prevails, not only in the department which I have just noticed, but in every other ; and, consequently, the varieties of manners and character are incomparably fewer than the number of men. You seldom meet with the bold, independent spirit, which, without asking leave of the sovereign modes and prescriptions of society, has formed its own habits, and without ostentation of singularity, can preserve them. What a scene for observation, if the inhabitants of a great city were as independent in habits as they are dissociated in affection ; and indeed it is somewhat strange that assimilation can be so extensive, while attachment is so restricted. But so it is, that each one seems anxious to be recognized as somebody, not in the designation of an individual, but in becoming an imperceptible component part of a bulk, by means of a servile conformity to the modes of general society, or to the modes prevalent in a large class. They are like the golden ornaments of the Israelites, which passed by a melting process from a multitude of diminutives into one illustrious calf.

The power of fashion, for instance, though it may be true that its authority to impose on its votaries a precise and perfect conformity in minutiae is lessening, would yet in London mould fifty thousand persons in conformity to its most fantastic model in ten days, each of them being convinced of the truth of the maxim, " Out of the fashion, out of life." And as to the other less general distinctions, society is thrown, if I may use the expression, into a few great *common-places*,—forms of life, not apparently so much intended to classify the men, as the men seem intended as materials to make up the forms, from each of which a few selections would give you a tolerable idea of the whole.

The illustrations will be obvious to you. What do you think, for instance, of the class whose habitual business is to walk about, to see and exhibit forms and draperies, and to kill time ? If similarity can secure reciprocal complacency, they will not

quarrel. They might make use of one another for looking-glasses. No counterfeiter of signatures, stamps, or quack preparations, was ever more careful of resemblance."

The miseries superinduced by extravagance, that tyrant of fools, are most experienced by those who are most ambitious of display. The amount of unhappiness is proportioned to the absurdities indulged, and, as these are usually numerous, the sum total of enjoyment allotted to brief life on earth is fearfully decreased. They who worship the veriest goddess of semblance and of shade must expect to find no true pleasure in their devotion, and no enduring peace as their reward. The maddest of the mad are they who enthrall themselves at a shrine where public virtue must be sacrificed to parade, and enjoyment to ostentation; where discontent perpetually corrodes the heart, and remorse consummates the gloomy scene.

This leads us to remark, fourthly, that extravagance not only strives most after what the soul least needs; seldom acquires honorably the means it employs; and is never contented with the splendid misery it may for a moment have attained; but ends in perpetual ruin where it had aspired after transient joys.

It is the fearful property of the sin now under consideration, to lead its victim blindfolded to destruction. Absurdities are ridiculous or repugnant to us inversely as we are accustomed to them. If we had lived from infancy with the most enormous monster, we should be no more startled at his appearance than by a Canary bird. Hence the importance of the early formation of our habits on the pure and exalted morality of the gospel. "Manners," says Burke, "are of more importance than laws. Upon them, in a great measure, the laws depend. The law touches us but here and there, and now and then. Manners are what vex and soothe, corrupt or purify, exalt or debase, barbarize or refine us, by a constant, steady, uniform, insensible operation, like that of the air we breathe in. They give their whole form and color to our lives. According

to their quality, they aid morals, they supply them, or they totally destroy them."

No young person is fit to enter upon the dangerous pursuits of life who has not decidedly formed the habits of industry, integrity, and moderation. Sloth makes all things difficult; active and upright zeal renders toil both easy and profitable. The man of sober enterprise works as well as wishes, and is honored; while he who attempts to live upon indolent hope, dies fasting, and is forever disgraced. If it is true that at the home of the honest and industrious, poverty looks in but dares not enter, it is equally certain that the mansion of the spendthrift, however gorgeous, is destined to be invaded by remorse and consigned to contempt.

"The man who builds, and wants wherewith to pay,  
Provides a home from which to run away."

The person whose tastes are naturally extravagant will be least controlled by high moral principle, and in this laxity of mind consists the imminent perils of our earthly career. The greatest misery of the prodigal is produced not so much by the uncertainty of his judgment, as by the inconstancy of his will and the recreancy of his heart. Piteable indeed are those citizens who are ready to hold anything rather than their tongues; keep anything except their word; and sacrifice nothing with composure except their reputation. "Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honor is humility." Sinful man sooner or later must learn, that reliance upon his Creator constitutes the only true safety as well as happiness, and that the principle of arrogant independence is moral madness and certain destruction. To seek supreme joy in perishable wealth, hollow display, and tyrannic power, is folly the most insane.

"Man, proud man,  
Dress'd in a little brief authority,  
Plays such fantastic tricks before high Heaven  
As make the angels weep."



Persons fond of worldly magnificence are impelled by the most degraded and murderous passions. Thus Haman came home full of pride and revenge. He called a counsel of his partners in splendid guilt. He recounts his wealth, magnificence, and popularity with the king and queen. "Yet," says he, "all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate. The most successful darlings of earth are never fully contented; their highest felicity is miserable, and they are nearest destruction at the moment when they boast of being most secure. Of this character, to use the words of an ancient bishop, was "Goliath, whose heart was as high as his head; his strength was answerable to his stature; his weapons answerable to his strength; his pride exceeded all: because he saw his head higher, his arms stronger, his sword and spear bigger, his shield heavier than any Israelite's, he defies the whole host; and, walking between the two armies, braves all Israel with a challenge: 'Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? Am not I a Philistine, and you servants to Saul? Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. Give me a man, that we may fight together.' Carnal hearts are carried away with presumption of their own abilities, and, not finding matches to themselves in outward appearance, insult over the impotency of inferiors, and as those that can see no invisible opposition, promise themselves certainty of success. Insolence and self-confidence argue the heart to be nothing but a lump of proud flesh."

Persons possessing in ample measure pecuniary wealth, and perverting it to the base uses of sinful display, are certainly not to be emulated by the good. This truth was well taught by Epictetus: "As when you see an asp in a golden casket, you do not esteem that asp happy, because it is inclosed in materials so costly and so magnificent, but despise and would shun it, on account of its venom; so, when you see vice, lodged in the midst of wealth and the swelling pride of fortune, be not

struck with the splendor of the materials, with which it is surrounded, but despise the gross alloy of its manners and sentiments."

The best men in every age have felt the need of superhuman aid, and have found true repose only when leaning on the arm which supports the pillars of the universe. God, as their king, made their law his will; "and in his will was their tranquillity." He was their fear and their love. "The earth," says Judde, "is a paradise to whoever seeks only to please God; but, on the contrary, it is an anticipated hell to the man who rejects his invitations." Of St. John, the precursor of our Lord, his holy mother said that he rejoiced in gladness. "This," says Diego de Stella, "is the difference that exists between good and evil men's joys: these do joy in their vanities and the other do rejoice in a good conscience before God. This is the rejoicing of St. John in joy." Albert the Great makes divine reflections on this head. "Nothing," he says, "can be happier than to place all things in Him, in whom there is no deficiency. Therefore, with all study, diligence, and labor, simplify your heart, that you may be converted from *phantasms*, immovable and tranquil, and that you may stand always within yourself in the Lord, as if your soul were in that now of eternity, that is, of divinity. If you continually and truly revolve these things within your mind, they will confer more upon you towards a happy life than all riches, delights, honors, nay, and besides, than all the wisdom and knowledge of this deceitful life, and corruptible world, even though in these things you were to excel all the men that ever existed." Augustine, speaking of men converted to God, says that they lose the things which they loved before. But where that love enters, the loss is remembered with additional joy and thankfulness; for in order to approach their primal source, it was necessary that they should part with the weights with which other men do vainly load their feet, toiling in hopes of happiness, which even the wise ancients knew could never be derived from such

things ; as Cicero, when he says of Antony, " he was happy, if there can be any happiness in such a mind." They had thought to find peace and gladness in the love of creatures ; and in them even Cicero could exclaim, " Oh how many and how bitter are the roots of sorrow." And now from these they are delivered by embracing poverty of spirit, which expects and finds light out of darkness, and, amidst privation, food on which they live, and never know satiety. That joy which might spring from natural sources, was exalted and secured to them by being sanctified ; for they learned to offer the expansion of their hearts to God as well as their earthly friend, and they looked up to him in their mirth and playful hours, as well as in times of serious meditation ; for even in the lowest things they saw, as Dante says,

—————The printed steps  
Of that eternal worth, which is the end  
Whither the line is drawn.

If the extravagant is thus overwhelmed in his own pit, and finds only misery where he anticipated delight, let us seek the mercy of God in Christ, and practise that humility and moderation which lead to unfading joy. Without the discipline of persevering grace, we can experience no hope and find no heaven. For as Barrow says, " Virtue is not a mushroom, that springeth up of itself in one night when we are asleep, or regard it not ; but a delicate plant, that groweth slowly and tenderly, needing much pains to cultivate it, much care to guard it, much time to mature it, in our untoward soil, in this world's unkindly weather. Neither is vice a spirit that will be conjured down by a charm, or with a presto driven away ; it is not an adversary that can be knocked down at a blow, or dispatched with a stab."

Jerome advised his friend to be ever well employed, that when the devil came to tempt him, he might find him working in the vineyard of his Lord. We have the highest mo-

tives to diligent devotion ; and, by avoiding all sinful extravagance, may secure the brightest treasures on high.

" Seek Truth, that pure celestial truth—whose birth  
Was in the heaven of heavens, clear, sacred, shrined,  
In reason's light. Not oft she visits earth,  
But her majestic port, the willing mind,  
Through faith, may sometimes see. Give her thy soul,  
Nor faint, though error's surges loudly 'gainst thee roll.

Seek Virtue, wear her armor to the fight,  
Then, as the wrestler gathers strength from strife,  
Shalt thou be nerv'd to a more vigorous might,  
By each contending turbulent ill of life :  
Seek Virtue, she alone is all divine ;  
And having found, be strong, in God's own strength and thine."

## CHAPTER IX.

### VANITY;

#### OR, THE DECORATED FOOL.

SAYS Solomon, Proverbs 21: 4, "An high look, and a proud heart, and the ploughing of the wicked, is sin." The language here employed, "ploughing of the wicked," is somewhat obscure. We suppose that the wise preacher would have us understand that the inflated sensualist, whose vanity would drive God from his own universe and substitute self in the place thereof, never acts upon righteous motives, nor moves towards just ends. Now the intention of the heart determines the moral quality of the external action, and if pride or vanity is the impulse, sin must be the result. Hence the justice of bishop Taylor's remark: "Holy intention is to the actions of a man, that which the soul is to the body, or form to its matter, or the root to the tree, or the sun to the world, or the fountain to the river, or the base to a pillar. Without these, the body is a dead trunk, the matter is sluggish, the tree is a block, the world is darkness, the river is quickly dry, the pillar rushes into flatness and ruin, and the action is sinful, or unprofitable and vain." It is for this reason that the sacred writer in another chapter declares, "Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud."

We proceed to remark that vanity is a weakness common to all our race; a foible the most prominent in those who are least useful; a sin every way pernicious, and which should be devoutly subdued.

The universality of vain self-esteem may be easily perceived. Vanity is a base ingredient, found in a greater or less degree in every character, the worst and the best. In the latter, its presence is "like a stain upon a vestal's robe, the worse for what it soils." All persons have their faults, and often reveal them most palpably while attempting vainly to hide them. The sagacious Franklin observed, "Scarcely have I ever heard or read the introductory phrase, 'may say without vanity,' but some striking and characteristic vanity has immediately followed." Pollok describes the universality of this evil as follows :

" In purple some, and some in rags, stood forth  
For reputation ; some displayed a limb  
Well-fashioned : some of lowlier mind, a cane  
Of curious workmanship, and marvellous twist :  
In strength some sought it, and in beauty more.  
Long, long the fair one labored at the glass,  
And, being tired, called in auxiliar skill,  
To have her sails, before she went abroad,  
Full spread, and nicely set, to catch the gale  
Of praise. And much she caught, and much deserved,  
When outward loveliness was index fair  
Of purity within : but oft, alas !  
The bloom was on the skin alone ; and when .  
She saw, sad sight ! the roses on her cheek  
Wither, and heard the voice of fame retire  
And die away, she heaved most piteous sighs,  
And wept most lamentable tears ; and whiles,  
In wild delirium, made rash attempt,  
Unholy mimicry of Nature's work !  
To re-create, with frail and mortal things,  
Her wither'd face. Attempt how fond and vain !  
Her frame itself, soon mouldered down to dust ;  
And in the land of deep forgetfulness,  
Her beauty and her name were laid beside  
Eternal silence, and the loathsome worm ;  
Into whose darkness flattery ventured not ;  
Where none had ears to hear the voice of Fame.

Many the roads they took, the plans they tried.  
And awful oft the wickedness they wrought.  
To be observed, some scrambled up to thrones,  
And sat in vestures dripping wet with gore.  
The warrior dipped his sword in blood, and wrote  
His name on lands and cities desolate.  
The rich bought fields, and houses built, and raised  
The monumental piles up to the clouds,  
And called them by their names. And, strange to tell !  
Rather than be unknown, and pass away  
Obscurely to the grave, some, small of soul,  
That else had perished unobserved, acquired  
Considerable renown by oaths profane,  
By jesting boldly with all sacred things,  
And uttering fearlessly whate'er occurred ;—  
Wild, blasphemous, perditionable thoughts,  
That Satan in them moved ; by wiser men  
Suppressed, and quickly banished from the mind."

Vain persons are exceedingly ambitious to make those graces which are calculated to impress others favorably seen by them. This evil is as prominent in the conduct of States, as in that of individuals. Wars are almost always carried on in defence of national vanity, as duels are produced by wounded self-esteem. The "fears of the brave and follies of the wise" on every hand tell how wide and powerful is the sway of vanity. Men seldom brave death, except in the presence of witnesses ; almost every quarrel could be speedily ended, if the spectators would only disperse. Great public discussions on religious matters are always great curses, as they are conducted in our day, because the most stubborn and degraded passions in the combatants are, by publicity, strongly aroused. Seeming zeal and ordinary valor are often but a cowardly fear of opinion. King William's servant who showed such great intrepidity during the passage from Holland to England in a tempest, explains it in his own words : " I feared lest they should see that I was afraid."

It is more than probable that there was no small measure

of vanity mixed with the haughty patriotism of Sidney, and the indomitable spirit of Cato. All the race of Adam are sick with this disease. One chief reason why we so much hate the vanity of others is because it offends our own. Every person is disposed to put the best side out, and offer the fairest aspect possible to the world. The ruling passion of all mankind was exemplified in Caesar who, on sitting to have his portrait painted, put his finger upon a scar which he bore upon his face, to hide it from the common eye.

It is a sad evidence and illustration of our fallen and grovelling state, that people are much more fascinated by the glitter of a peacock's tail, than by the self-sustaining majesty of the eagle's wing. All around the globe, appearances make nearly all the realities that men enjoy. Howitt, in his *Rural Life in England*, says, "I have heard of a gentleman of large fortune who, for some years after his residence in a particular neighborhood, did not set up his close carriage, but afterwards feeling it more agreeable to do so, was astonished to find himself called upon by a host of carriage-keeping people, who did not seem previously aware of his existence; and rightly deeming the calls to be made upon his carriage, rather than himself, sent round his empty carriage to deliver cards in return. It was a biting satire on a melancholy condition of society, the full force of which can only be perceived by such as have heard the continual exultations of those who have dined with such a great person on such a day, and the equally eager complaints of others, of the pride and exclusiveness they meet with; who have listened to the long catalogue of slights, dead cuts, and offences, and witnessed the perpetual heart-burnings incident to such a state of things. These are the follies that press the charm of existence out of the hearts of thousands, and make the country often a purgatory, where it might be a paradise." It is this mean spirit of vanity, emulating the aristocratic pride of those who feed in a wider sty, that curses so many persons, and justifies the awful truth of what was said



by Coleridge, that "Care, like a foul hag, sits on us all; one class presses with iron foot upon the wounded heads beneath, and all struggle for a worthless supremacy, and all, to rise to it, move shackled by their expenses."

Secondly, vanity is a foible the most prominent usually in those who are the least useful. Pride in dress, and riches, and station, and talent, is not entirely a useless passion, as we shall have occasion hereafter more fully to show, but it is one both dangerous and undignified. Vanity, which is an inferior species of pride, is especially indicative of a grovelling spirit; it seeks distinction by eccentricity, would win popular regard chiefly by personal display, and reveals an ignoble spirit in its possessor, as mushrooms, and less valuable funguses are usually grown in a rank soil, where better fruits can hardly be produced.

Vanity is sagacious only in the art of self-display. Like an inflated and bedecked balloon, it tends constantly to escape from the sphere of ordinary usefulness, and can boast of no utility save the capacity for transient ostentation at the expense of imminent peril. In the most frightful dilemma, its gaudiness is the last trait to disappear; plunged in the sea of destruction, its light and buoyant nature floats on the surface for a moment, and then sinks forever. It is most pernicious in its tendencies, because it is intimately associated with the worst passions. So copious and strong is the ingredient of envy in the composition of the vain, that no flattery is so efficacious on the frivolous as a malignant detraction aimed at some rival,—to enchant the decorated fool, ridicule his superior in folly. Sinners as we all are, it is easier to pardon an offence against the laws of morality, than a slight directed towards ourselves. Neglecting substantial graces, and aiming only at ephemeral display, the vain person exhausts the vigor of life in useless endeavors,

"And rooted stands in manhood's hour,  
The weeds of vice without the flower."

Vanity often creates the most despicable characters—hypocrites inverted—who strive to appear worse than they really are. It is an omnivorous passion that has no choice in its food, but must be constantly fed with vulgar gratification. Not unfrequently it resorts to the exaggeration of its own faults and vices simply to excite public attention. Byron was of this stamp, and he succeeded in passing himself off for candor, as one deserving sympathetic regard, instead of appearing in his true aspect, the victim of lust and the object of deserved contempt. He scorned moral restraint, and sacrificed himself in voluntary madness, as he has himself declared :

“ Though the rock of my last hope is shiver'd,  
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,  
Though I feel that my soul is deliver'd  
To pain—it shall not be its slave.”

But time is rapidly revealing the obscure and vulgar vices which blended with and obscured his splendid talents. What will eternity show ?

The decorated fool is always exceedingly impatient under correction. Nothing is so agonizing to the thin skin of the children of vanity as the application of a rugged and wholesome truth. It is said that the ancient Sybarites persecuted the cocks for crowing, as they were thus disturbed in their effeminate repose ; and such is the spirit of the inflated and indolent of our own day ; they will sooner submit to be wounded in their interests, than in their vanity. The decorated fool is “ one whom the music of his own vain tongue doth ravish, like enchanting harmony ;” and nothing exasperates him more, than the instruction which reveals to him his faults, because he is humiliated most painfully by the accusations secretly enforced in his own conscience and under which he already stands condemned.

The prevalence and power of vanity is attested by history as well as by common observation. When the war with Han-

nibal was at its height, a law was introduced at Rome by Caius Oppius, by which it was enacted, that no woman should use for ornament more than half an ounce of gold, or wear a dress of different colors within the city or any town, or nearer the city than one mile, and that no one should ride in a carriage drawn by horses, except in attendance on some religious celebration. In the five hundred and fifty-seventh year of Rome, a proposition was made to repeal this law, on the ground, that as the republic was in great prosperity, the original cause of the law existed no longer. A great debate arose on this point, in which many of the nobles joined, some for the law and others against it; the Capitol was crowded with all classes, showing great ardor and zeal, but divided in their opinions. The women, who being most interested in the result, were determined not to be controlled by the ordinary rules of decorum when their vital rights were so deeply involved, dispersed themselves through the streets of the city, thronged the avenues to the Forum, and besought the men, that this odious restriction on female ornaments might be removed. The throng of women was constantly on the increase, as their number was augmented to an impressive degree by perpetual arrivals from all the country around. Earnest deputations waited on the consuls, praetors, and other magistrates, to implore them to support their cause.

To resist this fearful inundation of fine ladies the incorruptible Cato arose, and was inexorable to their prayers. All his experience and convictions were in favor of the law. A man so wise and temperate in his habits, so attached to the frugal manners of the old Romans, and so hostile to luxury as the source of individual and national ruin, could regard with no favor a measure, in his view, so directly opposed to all sound policy. The inroad made by this seditious movement of the women, on the ancient rigid domestic government of the Romans, excited his highest indignation. He opposed the repeal in a speech stern and severe, earnest and vehement, dealing

less in argument than in sarcasm, insinuation and strong expressions of contempt. He began as follows: "If each of us, Romans, had supported the proper rank and authority of a husband in his own family, insisting, as he ought, on the obedience and respect of his wife, we should now have less trouble with the whole sex. But because the law is given us at home, and we are there the slaves of female insolence, our independence even in the Forum is contemned and trampled on; and because we have been individually vanquished, we actually stand aghast now we see our wives assembled in a body. I had hitherto supposed, that it was a mere tale, that, in a certain island, the whole race of males was cut off, root and branch, by a conspiracy of the women. Nothing can be more dangerous to either men or women, than to permit these secret assemblies, this caballing and intriguing. I am not confident, whether these machinations themselves, or the precedent they establish, should be considered more mischievous in their tendency. This female mutiny, whether it is a spontaneous act of the sex, or brought about by your instigation, tribunes, certainly implies fault in the magistracy, and I know not, whether it is more disgraceful to the tribunes or to the consuls. The shame belongs to you, tribunes, if these women are brought here to aid your seditious purposes; to us, if we suffer laws to be imposed on us by a *secession* of the women, as was formerly done by a secession of the common people. It was not without a deep sense of shame, that I just now entered the Forum through a press of females."

The indignant orator proceeds to suggest, that something worse is aimed at than the mere repeal of the Oppian law; reminds the assembly under what salutary restraints females were placed by the ancient institutions of the country; and gives the men to understand, that if once the women acquire an equality of rights, the superiority of the sex will follow as a necessary consequence. The introduction of luxury and avarice was the thing which Cato dreaded; and to guard

against so great an evil, he strongly urged the continuance of the law. He says, "You have often heard me, Romans, complaining of the profuse expenditures of the women, and also of the men, and not only of men in private life, but even of magistrates. I have told you, that the commonwealth was suffering from two opposite vices, avarice and luxury, plagues which have subverted the greatest empires. As the affairs of the republic are daily more flourishing, as we are enlarging our territories, as we have already passed over into Greece and Asia, which are opulent regions, abounding with the strongest temptations to indulgence, and as we are this moment handling the wealth of kings, I tremble, lest these treasures should gain a more entire mastery over us, than we over them. Believe me, Romans, the statues which have been brought into the city from Syracuse, threaten our ruin. I hear quite too many expressing their praises and admiration of the ornaments of Corinth and Athens, and sneering at the earthen images of the gods placed before the temples of Rome. For my part I prefer these gods so propitious to our interests, and who, I hope, will continue to be our patrons, as long as we suffer them to retain their stations."

But the upright old consul was defeated. The repeal of the law was carried, and the speech of the tribune Lucius Valerius, in support of the measure, is hardly inferior to that of Cato. To show that we are not unjust towards the fair sex, we will quote a paragraph from the speech of their ancient defender. As his antagonist had spoken contemptuously of the popular movement on the part of the women, styling it a mutiny and a secession of their body, it was important, at the outset, to remove any unfavorable impressions made by consular ridicule. The chivalric tribune begins with a compliment to Cato, and goes on to ask,—“But what novelty is there in the conduct of the matrons, because in a question which so nearly concerns them, they have appeared in public? Have they never come out in a body before? I will refer you, Cato,

to your own 'Antiquities.' Learn there, how often they have taken the same course, and always for the public good. And first, in the reign of Romulus, when the Capitol was taken by the Sabines, and a battle raged in the Forum, was not the contest hushed by the rushing in of the women between the two armies? And further, after the expulsion of the kings, and the legions of the Volsci had encamped near the city, did not the matrons avert the storm which threatened the existence of Rome? And when the city was captured by Gauls, by whom was the ransom paid? Did not the matrons unanimously contribute their gold for the public benefit? The cases may be dissimilar, as you say; but they show that the women have now done nothing new. In exigencies, where the interests of both men and women were at stake, nobody wondered at their conduct. Why, then, should we be surprised at what they have done in a matter which so peculiarly concerns themselves?"

Vanity is a vice limited neither to country, age nor sex. Everywhere may be seen decorated fools who have "cloaked and jewelled their deformities," reminding us of the belief that once prevailed that in India there were valleys where birds built their nests with emeralds to attract the moths. If you will glance in upon those assemblies

"Where broadcloth breathes, to talk where cushions strive,  
And all but sir and madam are alive;"

you will see those to whom the descriptive words of Christ may be applied, though in a sense diametrically opposed to their original intent. "They toil not, neither do they spin, yet Solomon in all his glory is not *arrayed* like one of them." The original application of these words was to the most lovely and modest thing in nature, a field-flower; using them as just now applied is but to repeat the melancholy truth of the poet, "lilies that fester are far worse than weeds." To the fickle and fantastic children of vanity, "life is a whirligig, a twirli-

gig, and so they go round." There is nothing substantial in their character, because they feed on no mental food that is either pure or invigorating, but forever pant after "sweeter sweetmeats in some sweeter form." In all the walks of fashionable ostentation they are indeed fragrant, "like an exhalation of rich distilled perfumes;" but their best odor is stolen from the muskrat, the essence-pedlar, and the bear.

"The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,  
And these are of them."

The history of dress, from the first gory lion-hide worn by a warrior of the infant world, down through the variegated skins of the Picts, the flowing toga of the ancients, the fantastic garb of old Gaul, the turban of the Turks, the picturesque attire of our western Indians, the gorgeous vestments of the early Jews, the kilt and the plaid of Caledonia, the sandal or symar, cloak, shawl, head-dress and other changeful accoutrements imposed by the fickle goddess running through all ages down to the ridiculous distortions of modern belles and beaux, would furnish fit illustrations to the history of every decorated fool. A puritanic student once denominated certain fine ladies "ambulating blocks for millinery."

The most sagacious among uninspired commentators on the merits and manners of our race has said, that the gaudy adornment of a frivolous person is "like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear;" and Solomon, in a comparison not less apt though less poetical, asserts that "a fair woman who departs from discretion is as a jewel of gold in a swine's snout." He who empties his pocket and jeopardizes his soul to adorn his back and perfume his hair, certainly "departs from discretion," and learns to his sorrow that "the fashion doth wear out more apparel than the man." All the charms of beauty, and all the valuable uses of wealth are lost upon the extravagant and indiscreet. When will mankind learn that

"It is the mind that makes the body rich ;  
And as the sun breaks through the darkest clouds,  
So honor peereth in the meanest habit.  
What ! is the jay more precious than the lark,  
Because his feathers are more beautiful ?  
And is the adder better than the eel,  
Because his painted skin contents the eye ?"

Thirdly, vanity is a sin every way pernicious, and should be prayerfully subdued. We are told of certain tribes of pagans who take for the deity of the day the first thing they meet in the morning. Many of our fine people are followers of the same creed ; though aided by the looking-glass, they perhaps secure a greater constancy as to the object of their devotion. But the more constant and faithful such worship is, the more fearful is the danger that impends over the devotee.

"How happy they,  
Who, when gay Pleasure courts, and Fortune smiles,  
Fear the reverse ; with caution tread those paths  
Where roses grow, but wily vipers creep !"

Beauty, talent, and genius, are excellent qualities of themselves, and much to be desired ; but when we love them, not because of their intrinsic worth and capabilities for good, but because they are ours—when we could not take any interest in them, in case they were wrested from our possession, then our love of them is nothing but vanity and selfishness, utterly devoid of all merit and undeserving of all praise. It is right to love all the gifts that God has created, but it is wrong to pervert their uses to unholy ends ; it is right to love all the virtuous and noble qualities that can belong to us, but it is wrong to believe them good simply because they are our own ; it is bad enough to render goodness the occasion of envy, instead of making it a motive to industrious acquisition, but the worst of all perversions is to make the good things we possess the material of ostentation and the food of pride.



Vanity is, in some respects, worse than pride. Where only the latter rules, some of its subjects are known to excel in many virtues; but in hearts where vanity is supreme, not one quality can be found either great or good. The proud may be stimulated at least to imitate those whose native grandeur comports with exalted pursuits; but the vain soon become so far self-blinded that they have neither the disposition nor ability to admire. They bend righteousness to the dictates of prejudice, in all those cases wherein prejudice should implicitly bow to the requisitions of the divine law. And hence, until self-esteem is conquered by sanctified affection and elevated above grovelling desires, the tastes of the soul are all degraded, and its destiny too awful to be described. Such dupes of vanity and candidates for despair

“ Sport for a day, and perish in a night,  
The foam upon the waters not so light.”

We need now and hereafter shall need still more that peace and joy which survive to sustain its possessor, “when tyrant’s crests and tombs of brass are spent.” This can be found only as we forsake vanity and cleave to God. “This will of our own,” says Bernard, “is a great evil whence it comes to pass that your good is no good to you; for of this blood-thirsty parent, there are two insatiable daughters ever crying bring, bring; for the mind is never satiated with vanity, nor the body with lust; self-will, subverting the hearts of men, and blinding the eyes of reason, is a restless evil, which always pressing upon the spirit, meditates things that are beyond thought and unattainable.”

Solomon describes a virtuous and prudent woman on this wise: “The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good, and not evil, all the days of her life. She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchant’s ships, she bringeth her food from afar. She riseth

also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. She considereth a field and buyeth it; with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. Strength and honor are her clothing, and she shall rejoice in time to come."

But instead of such maids and matrons we sometimes meet with those who flit idly from house to house; to pay futile visits, where, if the conversation were written down, it would be as unmeaning as the chattering of a swallow; persons who bestow all their thoughts and precious time in hollow ceremonies and glittering display, with so little good sense in their head, and so little true perception of the sublime and beautiful in their soul, that could an ape or parrot describe its own gambols and chattering, it would be a text-book of wisdom compared with the history of decorated fools in human shape. Miserable indeed are those who strain every faculty to appear august and important for a moment, and then, at the first flash of eternity, are destined to be transmuted into shame and everlasting contempt.

Vanity is a vice so subtle and influential in our fallen race, that any person endowed with uncommon gifts is in great danger of being destroyed by them. It is very rare to find a pretty face and a good disposition in the same person, since vain self-esteem, occasioned by uncommon physical charms, tends to pervert the whole character and degrade it to absolute contempt. Such persons glide haughtily along the stage of life, always wretched if not openly admired, "sparkling in beauty and destruction too." But the modest daughters of virtue, industry and grace present frequent exceptions to this rule, infinitely more grateful to the eye and heart of every sa-

gacious judge. He contemplates with delight those who move in the calm possession of domestic joys,

“ Veil'd in a simple robe, their best attire,  
Beyond the pomp of dress ; for loveliness  
Needs not the foreign aid of ornament,  
But is, when unadorn'd, adorn'd the most.”

This vice, like all others, soon involves its dupe in retributions of the most fearful kind and extent. If one ceases to be active and virtuous, the nervous system is immediately deranged, and fantastic but dreadful maladies succeed. Some imagine themselves dead, and others declare their bodies to be the abode of fiends. One imagines that he hears frogs croaking in his stomach ; another thinks his body a lump of butter, and is afraid to walk in the sun, lest he should be melted. Doctor Moore of London has recently published an account of a lady, who had passed an idle life, and who at last imagined herself a pound of candles, and dreaded the approach of night, fearing the chamber-maids should take a part of her for use.

We are discussing a solemn subject, but the whimsicalities of decorated fools are so ludicrous that often in their presence “ to be grave exceeds all power of face.” But who can smile when he thinks of the future destiny of those in whose vacant bosoms’ wilderness not one immortal hope is blooming, in the leafless desert of whose soul the fires of remorse must forever burn. Travellers to the judgment-seat appear best, like Christianity herself, neither in diamonds nor tatters, but when modestly robed in the divine garments of heavenly grace. Guido, in one of his pictures, represents a pious and beautiful virgin, sitting alone at her needle, attended by two angels. By this he designed to teach, that innocence and diligence are inseparable companions, and only those who are active in the discharge of their duties here below are blessed from on high.

In those chambers where pride has treated industry with

contempt, and vanity has laughed modest virtue to scorn, it will not be strange if the same destructive passions prevail to the last, as with the marchioness Pompadour, upon whose countenance the traces of her awful death were concealed by rouge.

To the blinded sinner whom vanity has thus adorned for an eternal sacrifice, we may say in the words of Baxter, "Can you forget that death is ready to undress you, and tell you that your sport and mirth is done, and that now you have had all that the world can do for them that serve it, and take it for their portion! How quickly can a fever, or the choice of a hundred messengers of death, bereave you of all that earth afforded you, and turn your sweetest pleasure into gall, and turn a lord into a lump of clay? Princes and nobles live not always. You are not the rulers of the *immovable kingdom*; but of a boat that is in a hasty stream, or a ship under sail, that shall speed both pilots and passengers to the shore. The inexorable leveller is ready at your backs to convince you by irresistible argument, that dust you are and to dust you must return. Heaven shall be as desirable and hell as terrible to you as to others; no man will fear you after death, much less will Christ be afraid to judge you."

## CHAPTER X.

### PRIDE;

#### OR, THE SCORNER SCORNE.

IN the preceding chapter, we discussed a feminine foible, vanity; at present we propose to consider one more masculine, but not less pernicious, pride. "Proud and haughty scorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath," Proverbs 21: 24.

Pride, like vanity, in a measure pervades all hearts; governs most fatally the undevout; and, having won a scornful mastery over the soul, miserably destroys.

In the first place, let it be remarked, that pride, like vanity, in diversified degrees is found in all hearts. This is a vice which may be divided into as many classes, as there are objects for its gratification. There is a pride of learning, which easily passes over into pedantic vanity. There is a pride of virtue, which is the fruit of self-righteousness, and the most remote from true moral worth. There is a pride of piety, that humbly acknowledges human depravity, and even exaggerates the hue of demerit, while at the same time it thinks well of itself, as having left behind the mass of vulgar sinners. There is a pride of generosity, which opposes "the pew system" as illiberal, while base stinginess is the real motive, and all its bluster about "exclusiveness" is got up just to "save the dimes." Besides, there is a pride of genius, originality, money, property; a pride of rank, from the first steward of a third-rate steamer up to the nation's president. The most refined philosopher, like the fantastic harlequin, may be tainted

with this vice. He is proud of being thought incapable of pride, and labors incessantly to exalt his own profession, or to lower the dignity of other men's pursuits. Plato adopted a most magnificent mode of displaying his contempt for magnificence; and Diogenes, still more inflated, discarded common-sense and clean linen, that he might attract more spectators round his tub. Pride is a paradoxical Proteus, eternally diversified, yet ever the same, whether developed in the peasant or prince. He who intentionally exposes uncouth costume at church, is probably a much prouder man than his neighbor who appears decorously attired. The feminine fanatic who greases down her hair in two exact hemispheres on her empty skull, prepares for public worship with the latent conviction that others will think her godly to a wonderful degree, and in her false humility commits vastly more sin than she who tastefully arranges nature's curls. "The worst of madmen is a saint run mad." "Thus," said the cynic, "I trample on the pride of Plato." "But," rejoined Plato, "*with greater pride, O Diogenes.*"

The extent and influence of this sin is well portrayed in the "Course of Time."

"Pride, self-adoring pride, was primal cause  
Of all sin past, all pain, all woe to come.  
Unconquerable pride! first, eldest sin—  
Great fountain-head of evil—highest source,  
Whence flowed rebellion 'gainst the Omnipotent,  
Whence hate of man to man, and all else ill.  
Pride at the bottom of the human heart  
Lay, and gave root and nourishment to all  
That grew above. Great ancestor of vice!  
Hate, unbelief, and blasphemy of God;  
Envy and slander; malice and revenge;  
And murder, and deceit, and every birth  
Of damned sort, was progeny of pride.  
It was the ever-moving, acting force,  
The constant aim, and the most thirsty wish  
Of every sinner unrenewed, to be

A god :—in purple or in rags, to have  
Himself adored : whatever shape or form  
His actions took, whatever phrase he threw  
About his thoughts, or mantle o'er his life,  
To be the highest, was the inward cause  
Of all—the purpose of the heart to be  
Set up, admired, obeyed. But who would bow  
The knee to one who served and was dependent ?  
Hence man's perpetual struggle, night and day,  
To prove he was his own proprietor,  
And independent of his God, that what  
He had might be esteemed his own, and praised  
As such. He labored still, and tried to stand  
Alone, unpropped—to be obliged to none ;  
And in the madness of his pride, he bade  
His God farewell, and turned away to be  
A god himself ; resolving to rely,  
Whatever came, upon his own right hand."

Pride differs somewhat from vanity ; the former glories in what it possesses, and in everything which has the character of force. It seeks not mainly for moral excellence, but is most devout at the shrine of power. Vanity, on the contrary, would find a solace in the consideration of other men in the absence of merits it can never discover in itself ; it pants for admiration, and would, if possible, create astonishment, but is too indolent to attract spectators by dignified actions, and too degraded to captivate them by any original and enduring charms. Pride gives itself a sort of dignity by emulating the deeds of the great ; vanity does no more than borrow a semblance which has not even the substance of a counterfeit. Pride resembles fruit modelled in wax ; vanity is like a stupid insect, attached to a beautiful plant where it becomes tinged with the hues which it at the same time destroys. Pride is ambitious to *be*, vanity is contented only to *appear*. Pride may stimulate genius, though to pernicious ends ; but vanity soon lulls both reason and conscience into portentous repose.

"One at a flash begins and ends in smoke,  
Another, out of smoke, brings glorious light."

Pride may sometimes be a useful spring-board to the aspiring soul, but it is much more frequently a destructive stumbling-block. Self is a severe master, the most exacting and the most difficult to satisfy; and he who is most devoted to selfishness is sure to be most chagrined in this life and most miserable in the next.

The vagaries and whimsicalities of the meanly proud are not worthy of dignified notice, but good men of every age have been afflicted with their eccentric demeanor and foolish fashions. President Chauncy, of Harvard College, profoundly versed in the Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, theology and physic, slept very little, fasted and prayed enormously, "travelled beyond the boundaries of fourscore," still preaching and lecturing; and, in his sermons, always spoke of the wearing of long hair "with the utmost detestation," representing it as a heathenish practice, and one of the crying sins of the land. John Eliot, the apostle of the Indians, had a similar antipathy. He despised and abhorred the use of wigs and tobacco—he prayed against wigs; preached against them; and ascribed to them most of the evils that afflicted the people. He could not conceive a more heinous sin, than for men "to wear their hair with a luxurious, delicate, feminine prolixity, or to disfigure themselves with hair which was none of their own." Great and good men, at home and abroad, have had their prejudices, pro and con, on this subject. According to Tertullian, shaving our beards is "a lie against our faces," and an impious attempt to improve the works of our Creator. Wigs, alas! have triumphed, and so has shaving; and if Chauncy and Eliot lived in our day, they would discover popular enormities calculated to excite scandal and vexation to the righteous still worse than these. I am not aware that history records any religious crusade against the mustaches, that elegant and del-



icate adornment of the semblance of a man, which has recently been defined as being "the upper lip put into mourning for the loss of brains."

It is said that "fine feathers make fine birds." This may be true in ornithology ; in theological matters, however, the saying is quite heterodox. But in dealing with popular follies, ridicule is much more potent than reason ; and to fret at the vain-glorious is only to increase their presumption and augment their pride. Says Laman Blanchard, "It is an absurd taste, or rather an irrational prejudice, that objects to fine feathers, except as aids to deception, and as substitutes for what they should adorn. It is good to laugh at that worst of vulgarities, which is always dreading to be thought vulgar ; and fears to array itself in a graceful and becoming garb, lest its solid qualities should be mistaken for mere glitter. He is a shallow philosopher who is frightened at the thought of being taken for a coxcomb, and dresses meanly to denote the greatness of his mind. The foppery of the beau is to be preferred to the foppery of the sloven. All grand disdain of trifles is a symptom of littleness, and an affected contempt for fair ornament is the most pitiful of affectations.

The "goodly outside" is excellent, when not falsely assumed ; but the worst natural face that nature's journeymen ever left unfinished is better than the bravest mask that ever hid it. The sword-sheath of exquisite workmanship—the gilt vellum and the rich leather in which the pages of poetry and philosophy are preserved—may be vanities, but they are never despised except by a vanity infinitely more preposterous. But because they are fair to see, and to be prized in themselves, shall we admit with our forefathers—as by implication we must if we take our text for the rule—that fine scabbards make finely-tempered blades, and that splendid binding makes a precious book !

Look at the crowds of gaudy over-dressed people in the world, who seem to have taken such pains to display, not to

hide, the hypocrisy which is their rule of action—who want to pass for fine people, and begin by showing that they do, which at once defeats the whole project. There are the fine feathers truly, but what are the birds! Look at the whole family of the Peacocks with tails spread! Do their splendid dyes convince anybody that they have melodious voices, or, when all that gorgeous plumage is plucked off, would a famished pauper dine upon the tenderest of the train while stewed boot-tops were to be had?"

Pride is sometimes the inspiration of useful deeds. One may be habitually actuated by high self-respect, and not be criminally self-complaisant; since a just consciousness of self is nobleness of spirit, that firm panoply of him who is neither frigid nor fractious, but social and sincere. A man without acute self-respect must be near akin to a brute. If pride makes some persons ridiculous, it probably prevents many more from becoming so. It often imparts unwonted strength to those who would otherwise perpetually recline under the ignominious languor of sated wishes and effeminate desires. Sublimar results are sometimes produced by the worst passions of mankind than by the best. Phidias, "with pride on his brow and glory in his eye," created the wonderful statue of Minerva in devotion to his country; but, to wreak revenge on that country by his wounded vanity and envenomed hate, he eclipsed his former work in the far more wonderful statue of Jupiter Olympius. Thus, in a truly great man, did passion become more potent than principle; and the mighty master became less renowned for the monument of his patriotism than for that of his revenge. But how insignificant is the talent thus elicited, compared with the calm and holy sunshine which cheers and illuminates him who builds his confidence on religious principles, and works for exalted ends. The splendors of unsanctified pride resemble the transient and evanescent lightnings of the storm, which derive their chief lustre from the gloom in which they suddenly expire. Of all the marvels in

the universe, perhaps there is nothing so astonishing to the angels as human pride. And yet how common and diversified is this sin. Says Pollok,

“It opened the niggard’s purse ; clothed nakedness ;  
 Gave beggars food ; and threw the Pharisee  
 Upon his knees, and kept him long in act  
 Of prayer ; it spread the lace upon the fop,  
 His language trimmed, and planned his curious gait ;  
 It stuck the feather on the gay coquette,  
 And on her finger laid the heavy load  
 Of jewelry ; it did—what did it not ?  
 The gospel preached, the gospel paid, and sent  
 The gospel ; conquered nations ; cities built ;  
 Measured the furrow of the field with nice  
 Directed share ; shaped bulls, and cows, and rams ;  
 And threw the ponderous stone ; and pitiful,  
 Indeed, and much against the grain, it dragged  
 The stagnant, dull, predestinated fool,  
 Thro’ learning’s halls, and made him labor much  
 Abortively ; tho’ sometimes not unpraised  
 He left the sage’s chair, and home returned,  
 Making his simple mother think that she  
 Had born a man. In schools, designed to root  
 Sin up, and plant the seeds of holiness  
 In youthful minds, it held a signal place.  
 The little infant man, by nature proud,  
 Was taught the Scriptures by the love of praise,  
 And grew religious as he grew in fame.  
 And thus the principle, which out of heaven  
 The devil threw, and threw him down to hell,  
 And keeps him there, was made an instrument,  
 To moralize and sanctify mankind ;  
 And in their hearts beget humility :  
 With what success it needs not now to say.”

We observe, secondly, that pride prevails most fatally over the undevout. We may take it as a general rule that they who are least acquainted with others, and with their own real character, will possess the most exalted notions with respect to

themselves. The Chinese treat European ingenuity with contempt, and still remain stupidly ignorant of the simplest laws of mechanics. The Persians think that all foreign merchants come to them from a small island in the northern seas, barren and desolate so as to be dependent on *them* for everything beautiful or good. A petty chief of an insignificant Indian tribe, is said every morning to have walked out of his wigwam, bid the sun good-morning, and pointed out with his finger the course he was to take for the day. The Khan of Tartary, who did not possess a single roof of his own under the canopy of heaven, no sooner finished his repast of mare's milk and horse-flesh, than he caused a herald to proclaim, that all the princes and monarchs of earth had his permission to go to dinner. The most troublesome boarder is always one who has been half-starved at home ; and he who is most proud and contemptuous towards the poor, is he who has just been raised above abject penury himself. Such is the depraved state and scornful disposition of the "lord of creation," arrogant towards his fellow man and neglectful of his God.

"Ask for what end the heavenly bodies shine,  
Earth for whose use? Pride answers, 'Tis for mine.  
For me kind nature wakes her genial power;  
Suckles each herb, and spreads out every flower;  
Annual for me, the grape, the rose, renew  
The juice nectareous, and the balmy dew;  
For me, the mine a thousand treasures brings;  
For me health gushes from a thousand springs;  
Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise;  
My foot-stool earth, my canopy the skies."

But, jealous of his own glory, God sets himself in battle-array against the proud usurper of the divine prerogative. "Surely he scorneth the scorners; but he giveth grace unto the lowly." Observe how this was verified in the case of the Babel-builders—Pharaoh—Sennacherib—and the proud opposers of the gospel. The centurion—the Canaanite—the pen-

itent—the publican—and those like them are the favorites of God. As Leighton beautifully remarks, “His sweet dews and showers of grace slide off the mountains of pride, and fall on the low vallies of humble hearts, and make them pleasant and fertile.”

Pride prompts men first to misinterpret the disgraces they encounter, and then to overrate them. This is the chief source of party-spirit. “Only by pride cometh contention.” Discussion stimulates self-esteem, and men become stubbornly attached to the opinions they have passionately defended. Polemics are generally bigots, not less enslaved to their own notions than they are contemptuous towards others. They strongly hate those whom they cannot convert to their own fanatical belief. Hence their perpetual criminations. Some point of factitious honor must be maintained; some supposed affront must be repelled; some rival must be silenced or defamed. “Pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the forward mouth, do I hate, saith the Lord.”

Nothing is so contemptible as habitual contempt. It is impossible to remain long under its control without being dwarfed by its influence. Says Wordsworth,

“If thou be one whose heart the holy forms  
Of young imagination have kept pure,  
Stranger! henceforth be warned; and know that pride,  
Howe’er disguised, in its own majesty,  
Is littleness; that he who feels contempt  
For any living thing, hath faculties  
Which he has never used; and thought with him  
Is in its infancy. The man whose eye  
Is ever on himself doth look on one,  
The least of Nature’s works, one who might move  
The wise man to that scorn which wisdom holds  
Unlawful, ever. O be wiser, thou!  
Instructed that true knowledge leads to love,  
True dignity abides with him alone  
Who in the silent hour of inward thought,  
Can still suspect, and still revere himself,  
In lowliness of heart.”

Nothing is more crippling than pride in its influence on the nobler virtues of the soul. "Before honor is humility." The stern and heroic qualities of man demand for their support that profound lowliness which to worldly minds appears opposed to the grandest development. The self-complaisant eye that often turns to the multitude in search of commendation, is never long and steadfastly fixed on elevated pursuits. Original and useful minds are always in advance of the unreflecting mass of men, though not above their sympathy and comprehension; if they stop to court the applause of grovelling cotemporaries, they can never successfully challenge a place among the great pioneers of improvement and benefactors of mankind. Arrogance carries in itself a most enervating spell, which all who would hope to live a virtuous and beneficent life must studiously avoid.

"Of all the causes which conspire to blind  
Man's erring judgment, and misguide the mind,  
What the weak head with strongest bias rules,  
Is pride; the never-failing vice of fools."

Human character of the first order is analogous to a Grecian temple, perhaps the most exquisite production of art, every way charming in its severe simplicity. What masses of plain surface—what neglect of beauties of detail—what economical limitation to the useful and necessary! It is the embodiment of elegance, grace and grandeur, presenting a whole that is beautiful, because the beauty is in the whole; there is little merit in any of the parts, except that of mutual adaptation and elaborate completeness. All pure architecture, material and immortal, is characterized by the same traits; all the ornaments are subordinate to the substantial portions, arranged in perfect conformity to the general design, as if they grew out of it. In such a happy combination, there is unity in diversity; and this always imparts the greater delight, as the decorative gracefully relieves, but does not ob-

scure the fundamental. But proud and belligerent characters never possess this kind of graceful symmetry. Their influence is disastrous everywhere, but most disastrous in the church. Says old bishop Hall, "The temple is framed in Lebanon and set upon Zion: neither hammer nor axe was heard in that holy structure; there was nothing but noise in Lebanon, nothing in Sion but silence and peace. Whatever tumults are abroad, it is fit there should be all quietness and sweet concord in the church. O God, that the axes of schism, or the hammers of furious contentions, should be heard within thy sanctuary! Thine house is not built with blows: with blows it is beaten down. O knit the hearts of thy servants together in the unity of the spirit, and the bond of peace, that we may mind and speak the same things; that thou, who art the God of peace, mayest take pleasure to dwell under the quiet roof of our hearts!

"Now is the foundation laid, and the walls rising of that glorious fabric, which all nations admired, and all times have celebrated; even those stones which were laid in the base of the building were not ragged and rude, but hewn and costly: the part that lies covered with earth from the eyes of all beholders, is no less precious, than those that are more conspicuous. God is not all for the eye; he pleaseth himself with the hidden value of the living stones of his spiritual temple. How many noble graces of his servants have been buried by obscurity! not discerned so much as by their own eyes! which yet as he gave, so he crowneth. Hypocrites regard nothing but show; God nothing but truth."

The first settlers at Jamestown were gentlemen-idlers. "When you send again," wrote governor Smith to the managers in England, "I entreat you rather send but thirty carpenters, husbandmen, gardeners, fishermen, blacksmiths, masons, and diggers up of trees' roots, well provided, than a thousand of such as we have." Dignified indolence smothers enterprise much more than it adorns it; as the masterly statues

which Phidias made, Bubo and Bombex draped in purple, and by their ridiculous taste left them thus defaced. Persons who are most vain are always the most useless; they are the most impatient under reproof, and the most insolent to their associates. But, as Burns has said,

“What though on homely fare we dine,  
Wear hoddens-grey, and a' that?  
Give fools their silks, and knaves their wine,  
A man's a man for a' that.”

Pride is potent, because the effect of display is powerful on the minds of all mankind. Says South, “Though upon the hearing of *Solomon's* wisdom, and the resolution of her hard questions, the queen of *Sheba* expressed a just admiration; yet when *Solomon* afterwards showed her his palace, his treasures, and the temple which he had built, it is said, *there was no more spirit in her*. What was the cause of this? Certainly, the magnificence and splendor of such a structure. It struck her into an ecstasy beyond his wise answers. She esteemed this as much above his wisdom as astonishment is beyond bare admiration. She admired his wisdom, but she adored his magnificence. So apt is the mind, even of wise persons, to be surprised with the superficialities of things, and value or undervalue spirituals, according to their external appearance. When circumstances fail, the substance seldom long survives; clothes are no part of the body, yet take away clothes, and the body will die.”

Thirdly, when pride has once obtained the mastery over the soul of a scorner, it will speedily lead him to destruction. The most awful strength of Divine eloquence is employed to delineate the character of the proud and the ruin it incurs. The proud and haughty scorner is declared to be an abomination to the Lord. The fierce spirits who in terror, blood and gold, from birth to death, flaunt in gorgeous ruin, meet with no heavenly composure in their career, and least of all will



they find peace in their end. "Pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment." Covered all over as they are with "pimples of red and blue corruption;" decked as they may be in the gewgaws of arrogant ostentation, they should remember that "hero dust is vile as other clay," and that

"The tower that highest rears its head,  
With heaviest ruin falls."

It is a true maxim which asserts that "small things make base men proud;" and it is equally true that "'tis pride that pulls the country down." Two beggars stand at the door, equally devoid of anything whereof to boast; one receives a cent—the other a dollar; it is quite likely that the latter begins immediately to suppose there is some good cause in him for the distinction, which dictate of pride impels him to regard his fellow with contempt. Such is the unhappy use man makes of the gifts which a benign Providence has bestowed. Instead of being humbled by a sense of obligation for superior favors received, the ungrateful reprobate swells with supercilious dignity above mortals of the common sort. But as an early moralist remarks, "If this be true, if a gentleman be nothing else but this, then truly he is a sad piece, the most inconsiderable, the most despicable, the most pitiful and wretched creature in the world; if it is his privilege to do nothing, it is his privilege to be most unhappy; and to be so will be his fate if he live according to it; for he that is of no worth or use, who produceth no beneficial fruit, who performeth no service to God or to the world, what title can he have to happiness? what capacity thereof? what reward can he claim? what comfort can he feel? To what temptations is he exposed! what guilts will he incur!"

It is a sacred assertion, often sadly verified, that "a man's pride shall bring him low." It leads to spiritual indifference, to the slumber of the heart, as well as that of the reason. It

induces those habits of thought and action which miserably enthrall the soul every way so as to prevent all noble expansion. Pride introduces distance and distrust ; while humility would bring together all the scattered resources of excellence, and blend them in efficient exercise. It imparts to all our spiritual powers a belligerent aspect, and keeps them in a state of perpetual hostility, of distrust, and of a disposition to invade the peace and rights of others. Pride would always domineer, while humility delights to serve. Pride seeks applause ; but humility fears adulation, lest it should detract from love. There is no more active, inventive, persevering, and universal selfishness on earth, than that of which pride is the moving principle. It is for this reason that the most exquisite pleasure this side heaven, that of feeling one's self beloved, is often fatally poisoned by extravagant self-esteem. And herein we see why envy is always so nearly allied to pride ; the latter repels examples of exalted worth instead of emulating them, because it refuses to recognize all kinds of superiority, and of course that which is most valuable and most real will wound it most. Hence the proud, in seeking to be original, often strive to be odd and outrageous ; proving conclusively that they who most disdainfully reject good models are the very persons who ought most to be profited by their use. Says Cowper,

“ Though various foes against the Truth combine,  
Pride above all opposes her design ;  
Pride, of a growth superior to the rest,  
The subtlest serpent with the loftiest crest,  
Swells at the thought, and, kindling into rage,  
Would hiss the chernb Mercy from the stage.”

The lessons of experience and the lapse of time seem to have little ability to restrain the pernicious tendencies of this vice. Its dupe, having wasted the morning of life is still ambitious of display, adopting fictitious charms and panting to “ triumph in the bloom of fifty-five.” Raleigh informs us that

queen Elizabeth, in the days of her decrepitude, ordered all pictures of herself, done by artists who had not flattered her ugliness, to be collected and burned; and in 1568 she issued a proclamation forbidding all persons, save "especial cunning painters to draw her likeness." She quarrelled at last with her looking-glass as well as with her painters; during the latter years of her life the maids of honor removed mirrors, as they would have removed poison, from the apartments of royal pride. Vanity and pride are both great patrons of the fine arts; but the orders of vanity are most abundant, since portraits are more flattering than history.

The above facts in relation to Elizabeth remind one of what a cotemporary of hers said respecting the awful death of Jezebel. "Her proud heart could not suddenly learn to stoop; rather she recollects her high spirits, and, instead of humbling her soul by repentance, and addressing herself for an imminent death, she pranks up her old carcass, and paints her wrinkled face, and, as one that vainly hopes to daunt the courage of an usurper by the sudden beams of majesty, she looks out, and thinks to fright him with the challenge of a traitor, whose either mercy or justice could not be avoided. Extremity finds us such as our peace leaves us. Our last thoughts are spent upon that we most care for. Those, that have regarded their face more than their soul, in their latter end are more taken up with desire of seeming fair, than being happy. It is no marvel if a heart, obdured with the custom of sin, shut up gracelessly. Counterfeit beauty agrees well with inward uncleanness."

"The professed disciple of Christ cannot too cautiously guard against the seductions of pride. Peter, on the evening of the Lord's supper, exaggerated most loudly the guilt of the disciple by whom his Master was to be betrayed. He was most anxious to know his name, and to hold him up to merited detestation; and immediately after, he himself falls into

the recreancy which he had just before denounced with such confidence and pride.

Lucifer proudly aspired to be like God in power, and was thrown down from heaven ; Adam strove to be like him in knowledge, and was expelled from Eden ; but Christ, the Redeemer of the lost, obeyed God perfectly and obtained an everlasting inheritance for all who humbly believe on him.

Beware of pride, the fearful influence of which extends through the present life, and sometimes even beyond. Said an Indian chief, who died at Washington, " When I am dead let the big guns be fired over me." The rich man, scorning to repose lowly like ordinary mortals, not unfrequently orders his own sarcophagus, and builds a family tomb replete with vain display, and destined to be the monument of posthumous pride. But what will all these hollow and perishable decorations avail your soul departing to the judgment-seat ? They will be as barren of comfort as the shroud of the grave round your cold body. Dying in sin, God will mock when your fear cometh. The scorner will thenceforth be eternally scorned. If you madly waste life, in the frivolous pursuits of him who dealeth in proud wrath, then the hour will suddenly arrive when you can no more avert the scorner's awful doom, than with your dead hand you can arrest the undertaker who screws the coffin-lid closely down upon your marble brow and heart congealed.

## CHAPTER XI.

### IDLENESS;

#### OR, THE SLOTHFUL SELF-MURDERED.

THE wise man tells us that "the desire of the slothful killeth him ; for his hands refuse to labor," Prov. 21: 25. This declaration presents to us the murderous influence of indolence, a subject worthy of profound attention. In the present discussion, it will be our purpose to show that idleness courts temptation ; cripples enterprise ; multiplies sorrow ; and enhances the pangs of an eternal doom.

In the first place, idleness courts the strongest and most successful attacks of temptation. Vice is the perpetual concomitant of indolence. Waters that are still soon stagnate, and from stagnation malaria, noxious and far-spreading, will inevitably be generated. In all communities where there is a lack of virtuous enterprise, crime walks with gigantic strides and desolating force.

While we refuse to sow wheat, the enemy will be busy in sowing tares. An empty mind is the devil's laboratory, in which the most deadly concoctions are manufactured and diffused. David yielded to temptation, and fell into outrageous sin, only when he had become indolent. Says bishop Hall, "Now only do I see the king of Israel rising from his bed in the evening ; the time was, when he rose up in the morning to his early devotions ; when he brake his nightly rest with public cares, with the business of the State : all that while, he was innocent, he was holy ; but now that he wallows in the bed of idleness, he is fit to invite temptation. The industrious

man hath no leisure to sin ; the idle hath neither leisure nor power to avoid sin. Exercise is not more wholesome for the body than for the soul, the remission whereof breeds matter of disease in both. The water that hath been heated, soonest freezeth. The most active spirit soonest tireth with slackening. The earth stands still, and is all dregs ; the heavens ever move, and are pure. We have no reason to complain of the assiduity of the work ; the toil of action is answered by the benefit ; if we did less we should suffer more. Satan, like an idle companion, if he finds us busy, flies back, and sees it no time to entertain vain purposes with us : we cannot please him better, than by casting away our work, to hold chat with him ; we cannot yield so far, and be guiltless."

Prince Eugene said to a friend, that in the course of his life, he had been exposed to many Potiphars, to all of whom he had proved a Joseph, merely because he had so many other things to attend to. The surest way to avoid evil snares is to be well and constantly occupied. The Turks have a proverb, which says, that *the devil tempts all other men, but that idle men tempt the devil.*

In the second place, idleness cripples the best energies of all dignified enterprise. God hath a bountiful hand, and filleth all things living with plenteousness ; but unless we have a diligent hand, wherewith to receive and secure it, we starve. Said bishop Sanderson, " He that by the sloth of his hand furnisheth himself of the means of getting, he is as near of kin to a *waster* as may be." Solomon himself has told us that, " He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster." The bases of the vices touch each other, and there are strong affinities that bind them closely together. The sluggard and the prodigal are twin-born of the same parentage. The slothful has no heart for work, and the prodigal has no prudence to preserve the fruits of honorable toil.

The ancient Bramins were accustomed to sit unmoved under a tree in stupid gaze at a speck in the heavens, imagining

that God was as idle as they were. Many moderns are employed in achieving about the same degrees of dignity and use. But where is the spot on our globe that looks as if God designed it for the paradise of lazy folks? He who has nothing to do, has no business to live. It is easy to recognize the place where the indolent do reside. It is a locality vividly drawn in Proverbs. "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and, lo! it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw and considered it well; I looked upon it and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep; so shall thy poverty come as one that travel-eth; and thy want as an armed man."

On the contrary, in the language of the same author, "the thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousness." Diligence is the eternal prerequisite to prosperity and health. Said Swinnock, "Thou mayest as well expect riches to rain down from heaven in silver showers, as to provide for thy family without industry in thy calling."

"Sure, he that made us with such large discourse,  
Looking before and after, gave us not  
That capability and God-like reason  
To rust in us unus'd."

The mental faculties contract indolent habits with as much facility as the physical. When one begins to lean on others for support, he will soon end by being incapable of either supporting others or himself. Such fickle and indolent persons stagger about with a tottering and indecisive step; in the language of Solomon, "the labor of the foolish weareth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city." They flutter from one object to another, and lounge along at hazard. No wind to them is favorable, because they have no particular harbor in view; no star is propitious, since their eye is fixed

with solicitude on none. If the time which is squandered in relaxing and debasing the powers of both body and mind, were employed in fortifying those powers in healthful discipline, we should not at the years of maturity be at a loss for an occupation, nor be left to waste the fire of fine talent which industry had matured.

Steel is sooner destroyed by rust than by use. There is an old Scottish legend, which represents the spirit that serves the wizard as being by necessity constantly employed; to suspend the work for a moment was to rend the enchanter. Such is the condition of the devotee of high excellence; that boon is won only at the price of perpetual toil. But most persons proceed as if they expected to obtain wisdom, as Abu Zeid al Hassan declares some Chinese philosophers thought oysters got their pearls, viz. *by gaping!*

The deplorable vice of idleness has wrought the ruin of thousands in all time. Pollok thus describes it:

“Two principles from the beginning strove  
In human nature, still dividing man—  
Sloth and inactivity, the lust of praise,  
And indolence, that rather wished to sleep.  
And not unfrequently in the same mind,  
They dubious contest held; one gaining now,  
And now the other crowned, and both again  
Keeping the field, with equal combat fought.  
Much different was their voice: Ambition called  
To action; Sloth invited to repose.  
Ambition early rose, and, being up,  
Toiled ardently, and late retired to rest;  
Sloth lay till mid-day, turning on his couch,  
Like ponderous door upon its weary hinge,  
And having rolled him out with much ado,  
And many a dismal sigh, and vain attempt,  
He sauntered out accounted carelessly—  
With half-opened, misty, unobservant eye,  
Somniferous, that weighed the object down  
On which its burden fell—an hour or two,  
Then with a groan retired to rest again.



The one, whatever deed had been achieved,  
Thought it too little, and too small the praise :  
The other tried to think, for thinking so  
Answered his purpose best, that what of great  
Mankind could do, had been already done ;  
And therefore laid him calmly down to sleep."

Men possessing fine opportunities for doing good, in high stations and on a broad scale, are still disposed to sink into the same supine and ignoble mode of procedure. But as long as depraved human nature exists on earth, it will ever be true that "the way of the slothful man is as a hedge of thorns." Lord Bacon, in his *Advancement of Learning*, makes the following comment on this proverb : "Here is lively represented how laborious sloth proveth in the end ; for when things are deferred to the last instant, and nothing prepared beforehand, every step findeth a brier or an impediment, which catcheth or stoppeth."

Idleness was a criminal offence at Athens, and should be so regarded everywhere, since "drones suck not eagles' blood, but rob bee-hives." Plutarch, in his life of Lycurgus, tells us of a classic "loafer" who was one day fined for this offence, and who was greatly condoled by a brother idler as having been *condemned for keeping up his dignity*. In our own age and country we have a plenty of those miserable "swell-heads" who puff and strut in all sorts of busy idleness just to keep up their dignity !

Bancroft records the fact that the first emigrants to the northern colony of this continent were all working men. The company was winnowed before sailing ; and all servants of ill life were discharged. They were not a "mob of gentlemen who live at ease," but were the selectest specimens of mankind. "No idle drone may live amongst us," was the spirit as well as the law of the dauntless community, which was destined to turn the sterility of New England into a cluster of wealthy States.

They who prefer to have nothing to do are very certain to do nothing good. Such persons hasten the period when they will be in want, and most effectually foreclose the beneficence they will need. For, as Poole has said, "Men's hearts are justly hardened against that man, who by his own sloth and wilfulness hath brought himself to want."

It is a good policy to strike while the iron is hot; it is still better to adopt Cromwell's procedure, in this respect, and *make the iron hot by striking*. The master-spirit who can rule the storm is great, but he is much greater who can both raise and rule it. To attain that grand power, one must possess the brave and indomitable soul of activity which prompted Edmund Burke to exclaim to his constituents in his famous speech at Bristol, "Applaud us when we run; console us when we fall; cheer us when we recover; but let us pass on—for God's sake let us pass on."

Indolence destroys energy and creates the stern demands of that necessity against which it is too improvident to guard. "Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger." There is but little difference between the sluggard who wastes the day in bed, and the stupid drone who goes about his work as if *cast into a deep sleep*. The palsy with which he is smitten is the most debilitating and disgraceful. "A slothful man hideth his hand in his bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again." He would rather suffer the pangs of starvation, than trouble himself so much as to put food to his mouth. All needful supplies are therefore stopped, simply for want of an effort to subdue the impediments which might easily be removed. The sad condition of a lazy specimen of degraded humanity in despair, results not from an original inability for noble enterprise, but from a criminal perversion of his powers and the prodigal waste of his strength. Says a quaint but forcible author, "There is not a man or a thing now alive, but has tools to work with. The basest of created animalcules, the spider itself, has a

spinning jenny and a warping-mill and power loom within its head; the stupidest of oysters has a Pepin's digester, with a limestone house to hold it in. How unnatural then is laziness!"

In the third place, indolence multiplies the sorrows of those who indulge it. The idler, oppressed with those aimless and useless efforts which are actuated only by self-conceit, forgets that pride confers no dignity, and that vanity engenders nothing but public contempt.

Persons of dull and languid habits, trail themselves sluggishly through life, as if some loathsome and agonizing viscus clogged every movement and prevented all refreshing repose. Their substance is nothing but the slime of indolence, and their contracted snail-path is covered with their own pollution. There is no healthy alacrity in them, none of that vivacious energy, which indicates either a vigorous body or a forcible mind. They drag themselves tardily to their toil, as if every joint were a socket of torture, and touch the implements of industry as timidly, as if they expected their effeminate flesh to adhere to whatever it handled. Work affords them no joy, and duty no delight; they are emasculated of all manly vigor, and have buried their conscience in the putrescence of their laziness. "They are a sort of perpetual somnambulists, walking through their sleep; moving in a constant mystery; looking for their faculties, and forgetting what they are looking for; not able to find their work, or when they have found their work, not able to find their hands; doing everything dreamily, and therefore everything confusedly and incompletely; their work a dream, their sleep a dream, not repose, not refreshment, but a slumberous vision of rest, a dreamy query concerning sleep; too late for everything, taking their passage when the ship has sailed, insuring their property when the house is burnt, locking the door when the goods are stolen—men whose bodies seem to have started in the race of existence before their minds were ready, and who are always gaz-

ing out vacantly as if they expected their wits were coming up by the next arrival."

Lead is heavy, gold is heavier, and platinum among the metals, is heaviest of all; but, take the kingdoms of creation at large, that which has the most specific gravity to make earth groan and heaven weep is, a lazy man. Were he not resisted by omnipotence, he would be an effectual clog to stop the wheels of enterprise, the car of salvation and the revolution of the globe. He would become the stand-point of immovable stupidity and blasting contagion,—the focus of venomous evils and their most prolific source,—the chief conduit of hell through which everything vile and destructive would be diffused over worlds arrested in silence, skies darkened with the pall of universal death, and an universe tumbling to pieces without a single trace of the beautiful or the good.

Idleness, if long indulged, is sure to become the most active cause of suffering; while "the labor we delight in physics pain." The stagnation of the elements is more destructive than a tempest; a palsy is more fatal to enterprise than a fever. One must have a noble object of pursuit, and a disposition actively to press towards his elevated goal, in order to be either happy or successful.

"The sweat of industry would dry, and die,  
But for the end it works to."

Inordinate indulgence always ends in discontent; while "what's sweet to do, will aptly find,"—the laborer will be facile in the use of means when he is hearty in his toil, and will meet with a double reward, pleasure in the struggle, and success in the end. But to the inactive and licentious, depression of spirits, and stinging remorse, always render the remembrance of those acts fearful, which in anticipation promised delight. Sloth smothers virtue much more than it prevents vice. The vicious may be boisterous in superficial and transient delights; it is not true joy, however, that makes them loquacious but ennui;

their tongue runs the faster in mad efforts to conceal the pressure at their heart. God has decreed that he shall be most restless, who is most at rest. Nothing on earth is so hard and excruciating as the couch of perpetual indolence. Spinola being told that Sir Francis Vere died of having nothing to do, replied, "That was enough to kill any general."

Pertinent is the advice of good old industrious George Herbert,

"Fly idleness; which yet thou canst not fly  
By dressing, mistressing, and compliment.  
If those take up thy day, the sun will cry  
Against thee; for his light was only lent.  
God gave thy soul brave wings; put not those feathers  
Into a bed, to sleep out all ill weathers.

Art thou a magistrate? then be severe.  
If stadious, copy fair what time hath blurred;  
Redeem truth from his jaws. If soldier,  
Chase brave employments with a naked sword  
Throughout the world. Fool not; for all may have  
If they dare try, a glorious life or grave."

-We have four hundred and fifty voluntary muscles, made on purpose to be actively employed; if they are *not* vigorously exercised, then the nervous power designed to energize the firmest strength is transformed into morbid sensibility and incessant torment. The idler soon becomes the victim of many maladies and the insipid organ of many lugubrious words; he has rendered himself mournfully hypochondriacal, hides himself in the solitude of his own sickly fancy, is forever haunted by the demon of disease, goes on everlastingly dosing himself with medicines that aggravate his insensibility to eternal realities, and is legitimately damned.

Galen desired the philosophers to send all bad characters to him for correction. He believed that by inculcating a wholesome diet and industrious habits, he would reform the world. There is much truth in this theory, since the regimen of the body greatly modifies the character of the mind. The advice of

Dr. Abernethy to the sick aristocrat of London is well known, —“Live on a shilling per day, and earn it.” The miseries of the rich are as great, and their wants as pressing, as those of the indigent.

“For he that needs five thousand pounds to live,  
Is full as poor as he that needs but five.”

The industry of many persons, blest with the most abundant means for self-murder, is performed mainly by the lower half of their head; the teeth are busy, while for all useful purposes the hands are idle, and gastronomical toil, carried on by force in a body in general unemployed, soon oppresses the stomach with gloomy acids which diffuse sourness of all sorts all over the person. The victim is dyspeptic, snappish, disconsolate, doomed. The best practical rules for securing happy health are: Keep your head cool with temperance; your feet warm with exercise; and if you grow bilious or corpulent, keep your eyes open, and your mouth shut. “Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty,” says Solomon; “open thine eyes, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread.” We are to use slumber only as “tired nature’s sweet restorer,” and as a preparative for *going forth to our work and our labor*.

The passive idler, of all men in the world, is the most difficult to please. Those who do the least themselves are always the severest critics upon the noble achievements of others. They are the most acrimonious, because their cynical souls are least purified with the healthful agitation of exalted emotions. If there were more refined sensibility in the world, there would be less bickering and more mutual love and magnanimous commendation in the hearts of mankind. We must desire to act, and act vigorously, to be happy. This is the motive principle of the soul, and the ground of its greatest joy. Happiness resides less in the possession of its objects than in their attainment. He who is born on a throne is seldom worthy of it, or happy in the sovereignty which chance has con-

ferred, instead of being by personal enterprise attained. The soul always in action, always agreeably employed, has little time for discontent, and much occasion for the keenest joy. Hence the superior pleasures of the virtuous poor compared with the luxurious indulgences of the rich. The party who dine at a tavern, are vastly more joyous than those who feast in splendid misery together in a palace. It was not on the tomb of Croesus, but on that of Baucis, the most charming epitaph of antiquity was inscribed ;

“ His death was the evening of a beautiful day.”

Antinomian enmity against active labors in accordance with the spirit and commands of Christ, for the amelioration of suffering mankind, has its origin in inveterate laziness rather than in the immaculate purity or practical beneficence of its theological lore. Said bishop Leighton, “ Holy men in former ages did wonders in conquering the world and themselves ; but we, unhappy, degenerate, drowsy creatures as we are, blush to hear that they did what we cannot or will not do. We are indeed inclined to disbelieve the facts, and rather choose to deny their virtues, than to confess our own indolence and cowardice.”

Finally, indolence inflicts retribution in the present life, and enhances the pangs of an eternal doom. “ Thrift is blessing, if men steal it not,” says the great poet of nature and truth. Ordinarily when men have the choice of being thieves or laborers it is the former profession they embark in, because sin has rendered it natural for depraved beings to prefer all things to fatigue. But this love of indolence is at the same time our strongest passion and our chiefest bane. The desire of the slothful killeth him. He makes no appropriate effort, reaps no valuable fruit, pines in destitution self-imposed, and in disgraceful vexation frets himself into a fiery grave. There is food enough to be had by toil ; but rather than be industrious he would sit still and starve. He has hands given him as in-

struments for attaining a livelihood ; but he has supinely lodged them in his bosom, and with pusillanimous whinings complains of the world's neglect. The miserable wretch is as cowardly as he is indolent, and his fears are as unfounded as they are effeminate. "The slothful saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets." What reason has the stupid miscreant to suppose that the public streets are the ordinary haunts of wild beasts? The absurdity of the excuse indicates the degradation of him who offers it. The truth is, he is afraid to be slain without, only because he has already given himself up to be slain within. His own ferocious intemperance is the monster by which he is most fatally torn.

The guilt of doing nothing is very great. Said lord Bacon, "Men must feel that in this theatre of life it is reserved only for God and angels to be lookers on." Launch forth into the deep, was the command of Christ to his disciples. In his miracles, he ever met nature in her own bounds, and, when she had done her best, he supplied the rest by his overruling power. The same being who could have caused the fishes to leap upon dry land, chose rather to find them in their own element and at a proper depth : "Launch out into the deep." There is much truth in the saying that "fortune favors the brave ;" it is synonymous with that other sound maxim, "God helps them who help themselves." He who idles away his youth, will meet a fearful retribution in the time of his old age if not in the horrors of premature death. Industry is the first law of our being, and we are not to labor for the meat that perisheth, but that which endureth unto everlasting life. Our activity is to be expended in honorable enterprise on earth, while our affections are taught to soar in purity above it. God never will invest idleness and dissipation with the privileges and honors that attend and reward industrious virtue. .

The laws of our physical and mental constitution, in perfect harmony with the revealed code of our religion, teach us to be not slothful in business ; fervent in spirit ; serving the Lord.



Thomson's excuse for reposing in his own "Castle of Indolence" was, that he had nothing to do. But we have much to do—a soul to save—a heaven to win for ourselves and our brethren of the human race. "They beckoned to their partners in the other ship, that they should come and help them." On this Scripture, old bishop Hall remarks, "There are other ships in partnership with Peter; he doth not fish all the lake alone. There cannot be a better improvement of society than to help us in gain, to relieve us in our profitable labors, to draw up the spiritual draught into the vessel of Christ and his church. Wherefore hath God given us partners, but that we should beckon to them for our aid in our necessary occasions? Neither doth Simon slacken his hand, because he had assistants. What shall we say to those lazy fishers, who can set others to the drag, while themselves look on at ease, caring only to feed themselves with the fish, not willing to wet their hands with the net?"

Indolence, like all the vices of which it is the chief patron, brings its own punishment; its listless torments are precursors of the still more excruciating pangs which are destined to crown and confirm the eternal ruin of both body and soul. Speaking of Antony's interview with Cleopatra, "when Venus came to feast with Bacchus, for the benefit of Asia," the ancient historian says that "then the veteran fell into every idle excess of puerile amusement, and *offered at the shrine of luxury*, what Antipho calls the greatest of all sacrifices, *the sacrifice of time*." But Christianity proclaims another, and infinitely greater catastrophe—the loss of the soul!

If one would be strong in body, clear in intellect, useful in time, and happy in eternity, he must do something more than "sport with Amaryllis in the shade, and play with the tangles of Nearea's hair." He must love hard working, pure living and exalted thinking; he must cling with fondest attachment to that divine pursuit which Dr. Johnson admirably called "the invisible riot of the mind, that secret prodigality of being,

secure from detection, and fearless of reproach." The luxury of chaste thought and beneficent action is the noblest this side paradise,—it is "Heaven on earth begun and glory in the bud." On the other hand, the retribution which attends vice and indolence here, and will hereafter avenge them in eternal woe, is both certain and terrific. The worst idleness is that of the *heart*. Think of the condition and prospects of a voiceless, thankless, prayerless heart. He who rebels against his conscience soon becomes the slave of his own outraged will, and having abandoned himself to wickedness, he cannot stop. His spirit has already become infernal, and, as the awful abyss of unending despair closes over him, with one wild shriek of horror he sinks among kindred devils damned.

## CHAPTER XII.

### INDUSTRY;

#### OR, THE DILIGENT MADE RICH.

THE theme of the present discussion is found in Proverbs 10: 4. "He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich." This maxim we shall expand and illustrate under the following heads.

Industry is an exhilarating privilege, vouchsafed to promote the serenest happiness on earth; it is an honorable grace, given as the means of acquiring the best wealth; and is a Christian obligation, imposed upon our race to develop the noblest energies and insure the highest reward.

In the first place, the serenest happiness we can enjoy on earth is derived from virtuous industry. "It is with us as with other things in nature," says Barrow, "which by motion are preserved in their native purity and perfection, in their sweetness, in their lustre, rest corrupting, debasing, and defiling them. If the water runneth, it holdeth clear, sweet, and fresh; but stagnation turneth it into a noisome puddle; if the air be fanned by winds, it is pure and wholesome; but from being shut up, it groweth thick and putrid; if metals be employed, they abide smooth and splendid; but lay them up, and they soon contract rust; if the earth be belabored with culture, it yieldeth corn; but lying neglected, it will be overgrown with brakes and thistles; and the better the soil is, the ranker weeds it will produce; all nature is upheld in its being, order, and state, by constant agitation; every creature is incessantly employed in action conformable to its designed end

and use; in like manner the preservation and improvement of our faculties depends on their constant exercise."

Nine-tenths of the miseries and vices of mankind proceed from indolence and idleness. Persons who have naturally active minds,—whose "quick thoughts like lightning are alive,"—are most perniciously affected by the evils of sloth. The favored sons of genius, endowed with great original powers, were not made for repose; indolence will quickly "freeze the genial current of the soul," and if left idle long they perish from inaction, like a scimitar corroded and destroyed by rust. But the active occupation of our faculties is a safeguard against three great evils, vice, penury, and desponding gloom. Says Colton, "Ennui has made more gamblers than avarice, more drunkards than thirst, and more suicides than despair." If we would be both useful and happy, we must keep ourselves industriously and virtuously employed. Old Dumbiedikes was wise in charging his son to "be aye sticking in a tree when he had naething else to do." Count de Caylus, a French nobleman, being born to wealth and princely idleness, turned his attention to engraving and made many fine copies of antique gems. One of the nobility demanded from him a reason for this procedure, and was told by the industrious Count, "I engrave, that I may not hang myself."

It is an old maxim, that "nothing moves without being moved," a simple truism, but full of meaning. Action is life and health; repose is death and corruption. Says an old writer, "Industry is commended to us by all sorts of examples, deserving our regard and imitation. All nature is a copy thereof, and the whole world a glass wherein we may behold this duty represented to us. We may easily observe every creature about us incessantly working toward the end for which it was designed, indefatigably exercising the powers with which it is endued, diligently observing the laws of its creation. Even beings void of reason, of sense, of life itself, do suggest unto us resemblances of industry; they being set in continual action

toward the effecting reasonable purposes, conducing to the preservation of their own beings, or to the furtherance of common good. The heavens do roll about with unwearied motion; the sun and stars do perpetually dart their influences; the earth is ever laboring in the birth and nourishment of plants; the plants are drawing sap and sprouting out fruits and reeds, to feed us and propagate themselves; the rivers are running, the seas are tossing, the winds are blustering, to keep the elements sweet in which we live."

God never favors the idle with visions of divine glory, nor will he be likely to protect such by the aids of his grace. As long as the monarch of Israel was industrious he was happy and innocent; but as soon as he reclined on the couch of idleness he became the dupe of temptation. Those who are actively employed in honorable pursuits, have little time for evil indulgence; but the idle have neither the leisure nor power to avoid sin. Active habits essentially promote the health of both body and soul. "In fine," says Barrow, "industry doth free us from great displeasure, by redeeming us from the molestations of idleness, which is the most tedious and irksome thing in the world, racking our soul with anxious suspense and perplexing distraction; starving it for want of satisfactory entertainment, or causing it to feed on its own heart by doleful considerations; infesting it with crowds of frivolous, melancholic, troublesome, stinging thoughts; galling it with a sense of our squandering away precious time, or our slipping fair opportunities, and of our not using the abilities and advantages granted us, to any profit or fruit."

There are many people in the world who seem to be of no earthly use, and who certainly exert no heavenly influence. Persons of the true stamp are "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." But divers individuals appear to have no business, and are fervent in no wholesome exercise. If they are busy at all, it is the busy idleness described in the Castle of Indolence:

"Their only labor is to kill the time,  
And labor dire it is, and weary wo.  
They sit, they loll, turn o'er some idle rhyme,  
Or saunter forth, with tottering steps and slow :  
This soon too rude an exercise they find—  
Straight on the couch their limbs again they throw,  
Where hours on hours they sighing lie reclined,  
And court the vapory god soft-breathing in the wind."

But such languishing drones are always invested with the flames of torment which their own indolent habits ignite and feed. Chrysostom said truly, that "there is nothing more unpleasant, more painful, more miserable, than a man that hath nothing to do: Is not this, saith he, worse than ten thousand chains, to hang in suspense, and be continually gaping, looking on those who are present?"

On the contrary, industry gives repose its sweetest balm, appetite its strongest zest, and life its most grateful relish. Says Solomon, "The sleep of a laboring man is sweet." In another proverb he adds, "The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting," and therefore it cannot be very grateful to him; but, says he, "the substance of a diligent man is precious;" that is, what a man has himself earned, he will duly prize. The exhilaration of mind experienced by the enterprising in obtaining property is more pleasing and satisfactory than the greatest amount of wealth when once acquired. The best thing about hunting is the vigorous sport afforded by the pursuit of the game, and not the mercenary consideration of its intrinsic value. The exercise and the triumph are much more valuable than the spoils, while no dish is so grateful to the voracious appetite as the game we have ourselves caught. It is this great law of our nature that the wise preacher referred to in the proverb just quoted respecting the hunter, and in relation to which the golden-mouthed patriarch of the Greek church said: "Our soul is more affected with those things for which it hath labored; for which reason, God

hath mixed labors with virtue itself, that he might endear it to us."

Solon made laws expressly to punish idleness, and it is a pity that modern legislation could not reach and rectify this evil; but unfortunately our law-makers are too often the most outrageous offenders on this score. Cicero said of an indolent man, "he draws his breath, but doth not live." There are none of the strong, healthy pulsations of life about him. He is his own greatest plague, the dupe and abode of demons, a mass of corruption that breeds contagion among the pure and deserves the contempt of all. Cassian said, "A working monk is assaulted by one devil, but an idle one is infested by unnumbered infernal spirits." Indolence is a great vice and quite too common. To counteract its pernicious tendencies, we need a vast increase of high and holy enterprise. It is not the placidity of stupid ease that we should covet, but the repose which is requisite for the renewal of exhausted strength, the serenity that succeeds the storm, and the salubrity that repays its ravages. The hurricane is more profitable than perpetual calm. "Tempests may shake our dwellings and dissipate our commerce, but they scourge before them the *lazy elements*, which otherwise would stagnate into pestilence."

In the second place, industry is an honorable grace, given as the means of acquiring the best wealth. The Lord's visitations of distinguished favor are always to the diligent. That great men may not be ashamed of honest vocations, the greatest that ever lived have been contented, happy, and honored while in the pursuit of humble trades. Moses, in all his mental growth, and in all his ascent in the scale of dignity, clung to his shepherd's crook. David, like Moses, was engaged in manual toil, when called to impart the highest instruction and exercise sovereign power. Elisha was at the plough, when called to be a prophet; Gideon was at the threshing-floor, when summoned to lead the hosts of Israel; and the shepherds of Bethlehem were wakeful and diligent in the care of

their flocks, when greeted by angels with the tidings of Messiah's birth.

In all labor, both in natural and spiritual husbandry, there is profit. God works by means, not by miracles; and his auxiliaries in subduing the earth and blessing it are the active, the slothful never.

"All is the gift of Industry; whate'er  
Exalts, embellishes, and renders life  
Delightful. Pensive Winter cheer'd by him  
Sits at the social fire, and happy hears  
Th' excluded tempest idly rave along;  
His harden'd fingers deck the gaudy Spring;  
Without him Summer were an arid waste,  
Nor to th' Autumnal months could thus transmit  
Those full, mature, immeasurable stores,  
That wave around."

Alexander the Great, reproving some of his friends for degenerating into luxury and sloth, says Plutarch, told them that "it was a most slavish thing idly to be at ease, and a most royal thing to labor." When Cicero recommended Pompey as a candidate for a high public office, he enumerated the qualities which adorn greatness, and in which he said his friend excelled: "Labor in business, valor in dangers, industry in acting, counsel in planning, and expertness in performance." This language of experience and observation, like that of all other sagacious and worthy men, is in perfect harmony with the maxims of divine wisdom. "The hand of the diligent shall bear rule," says Solomon; yea, so honorable is industry, that when exercised in the most subordinate station, it is productive of esteem. "He that waiteth on his master shall be honored;" that is, to attend with diligence to the business committed to our care by employers, and those in high stations, is to win their confidence and the esteem of all. Look at the history of good apprentices and faithful clerks, and see how this proverb is verified. Examples are as numerous, almost,



as are distinguished men in all departments of business life. They were at the outset poor but honest and industrious; contented to be the youngest, the weakest, and to perform the most drudgery; soon they came to be esteemed by all associates, then trusted as chief confident, anon a junior partner in the concern, and finally a potent and honored master in the most elevated walks of commerce, art, or trade. Whereas, "the slothful is under tribute;" and, "He that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame." He is the occasion of loathing and contempt to his relations and acquaintances, not so much on account of his beggarly appearance, as for his despicable indolence and the disgraceful consequences it has produced.

Apollo found a tortoise shell at break of day on the seashore, and fashioned it into a harp. He was an industrious deity, and an example to man. The graceful vigor of his frame was won from the frigid purity of ocean's wave, and the splendid skill of his intellect he studiously improved in the light of morning's first and chastest beams. Everything melodious and useful originates in the heart and hands of devoted industry, as the original instrument of music first resounded at early morn, in the purest air, on the sublimest shore, tuned by the most noble and agile of the fabled gods. An instructive companion to this is furnished from the same source of mythologic story. Narcissus was represented by the ancients as idly gazing at his own features reflected in the placid mirror of a fountain, until fatally and foolishly enamored of his own insipid charms, he perished there an image of indolence and vanity.

Every person should early in life adopt some branch of business, for which he is adapted by nature, or to which he is limited by the station assigned him by Providence, and in which particular pursuit diligence is both desirable and lawful. *Æropus*, king of Macedonia, chose for his favorite occupation to make lanterns; and a late monarch of France was an adept

in the manufacture of locks. Now this was a kind of employment perfectly honorable, but it was not their appropriate business. They should have either abdicated their thrones, or have consecrated all their time and talents to the efficient discharge of official duties. It is not the relative respectability of different pursuits that we are to trouble ourselves about, but our chief duty consists in being most earnest and upright in the discharge of some specific and appropriate calling. The poet has said truly—

“Honor and shame from no condition rise,  
Act well your part, there all the honor lies.”

It is necessary to be up and doing, working while it is day. The most vigorous are always the most active, and most virtuous of minds. Heroes in every exalted walk of life are characterized by a restless, glowing, unappeasable activity. There is laid upon them a necessity for beneficent action. Naturally they are powerful and grand, as “a great river, in its ordinary state, is equal to a small one when swollen into a torrent.” That which ordinary minds shrink from as the extreme of exhausting toil, they take as their starting-point,—the initiatory step of devout and sublime aspiration. The better order of minds labor not so much for fame or money as from the love of active exercise; they are without hope, if they are deprived of useful occupation.

Every segment of the great circle of civilized society is useful, except that occupied by the lazy man; he alone is worse than useless. Each link in the great chain of humanity may be equally sound, and equally useful, though unequally formed and polished, except the indolent; he is always as useless and treacherous as a rope of sand. Every one may be of some utility in the world's hive, except the miserable do-nothing and eat-everything drone; he is an insufferable nuisance in his best estate, and the sooner he is marched off, as honey-bees dispose of their lazy members, the better. He deserves to

have his coffinless grave dug in the mud, at low-water mark, with a putrid sea-monster for his monument, and the howling tempests of midnight for his dirge.

Activity is not only honorable, but is as prolific in its pecuniary compensation as it is conducive to spiritual wealth. "He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread," says the wise man ; and "he that gathereth by labor shall increase." A divine blessing is insured to diligence ; abundant, as a general rule ; always profuse enough to create satisfaction in the devout. It is not strange that the indolent are usually unfortunate and unhappy. "As the door turneth upon its hinges, so doth the slothful man in his bed." But such motion makes no progress ; it is a supine and disgraceful mode of existence which produces no good, and therefore, by the righteous government of God, is crowned with no exalted reward. If any will not work, neither shall he eat, is a fundamental principle in the divine economy. The only cure vouchsafed for the evils of the fall, is found in the active pursuit of those noble ends which God originally set up as the goal and admiration of the human mind. The sure guaranty of wealthy increase lies in the consecration of ourselves and all our substance to the Lord. "All that we can have," says Swinnoek, "we have it on this condition, to lay it down unto the honor of our Master, from whose bounty we received it."

A sluggard who attempts to live *gratis* in the world, and especially such a nuisance in the church, is a useless cipher among men, a burden to the earth, and a loathsome excrescence on the healthy growth of society, sucking otherwise productive aliment from the resources of the general good, but yielding in return neither fruit nor ornament. On the other hand, the industrious and upright man, however obscure may be his origin, and lowly his pursuit, finds the best prosperity, the most enduring wealth, and the loftiest dignity and power. He wins a prize richer by far and "better than rubies, and incomparably doth it excel all things that may be desired."

But it is a prize that must be earned ; it cannot be inherited, nor can it be either borrowed or bought. " It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire."

In the third place, industry is a Christian obligation, imposed on our race to develop the noblest energies and insure the highest reward. The paradisiac condition of our first parents was not one of happy indolence. They were placed in the garden under the double obligation to guard and to cultivate it. To guard it, because an enemy was to be at hand, against whom they needed both to watch and contend ; to cultivate it, probably with labors blessed with richer reward than afterwards when, on account of sin, earth was cursed, and yet with actual and watchful labor were they to toil even in their un-fallen state. The gospel does not abolish industry, but changes its nature and chief design ; it dignifies toil, mitigates the evils connected therewith, and creates new motives to diligence. The triumph achieved on Calvary never was designed to supersede the duty of close application to enterprising duty. Its first command compels us to some honorable and useful pursuit. Its language is " Study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you. If any man will not work, neither let him eat." The climax of sin in certain worthless individuals whom the apostles reprov'd, is stated as follows : " And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house ; and not only idle, but tattlers also, and busy-bodies, speaking things which they ought not." This writer in the fourth chapter of his first epistle to the Thessalonians establishes nothing more clearly than that those in the church who do not work are to be dealt with as " disorderly walkers."

Existence was given us for action rather than indolent and aimless contemplation ; our worth is determined by the good deeds we do, rather than by the fine emotions we feel. They

greatly mistake, who suppose that God cares for no other pursuit than devotion. When one works with pure hands and an honest heart, he honors his Maker as well as when he prays ; indeed, his piety and his diligence must struggle together, or the fruits offered on our altars are never smiled on by Heaven. Man is not sent hither to mope and muse, but work ; as was long since said, " the end of man is an Action, not a Thought." " Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might," is the divine rule, and our peace, health, and wealth depend upon our keeping this command. We are not to be of that class who are " fond to begin—but for to finish loth ;" on the contrary, " like a star unobscured, yet unsetting," we are to toil brightly, steadily on.

Every Christian, for the sake of God and man, should strive to be *first-rate* in his own particular calling. A firm and consecrated ambition which incessantly aims to accomplish the greatest amount of good, is the foe of idleness and frivolous employments ; " it tempers the thirst for sensual indulgence, nourishes high contemplations and generous feelings, and as far as it attains its objects, works out nothing but direct and positive good to the individual and the world." Says Solomon, " The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousness ; but of every one that is hasty, only to want." This describes the patient plodding of a diligent man ; content with small gains, and never discouraged by difficulties, he is sure ultimately to be crowned with success. He is not furious but firm and active. Sunshine and storm come and go, but there he is, like the provident ant, laying up substantial supplies for the future time of need.

God never pours his blessing on the spiritual drone. He does not employ sentimental indolence in his service, but sanctified energy. It is the *labor* of the righteous that tendeth to life, not their lazy complaints. " *Occupy* till I come," said Christ, be cultivating the field, and not quarrelling about it ; emulate others in good deeds, and not fritter away your

strength in the defence of a fruitless creed. These are they who disgrace our religion by making the power of doing little an excuse for doing nothing. We are bound to be active, remembering that we are the depositaries of the conservative elements of truth and life. If we arrest our diligence a moment in the service of Christ, we suspend the renovating process which was designed to leaven and redeem our globe. As lights in the world, satellites of the great luminary of Salvation, we are appointed to advance perpetually in our respective orbits, invading the thickest gloom, and dispersing it with the splendors of holy zeal.

The most prominent, and most prevailing element throughout the whole empire of the Almighty, is activity. God has no servant, of any grade, or in any kingdom, that has not something to *do*, some specific office to perform. We believe that the happiness of heaven will consist mainly in an increased conformity to this law. The great and the good are discontented here; but the restlessness of such, like that of the god of day, is a constant progression and inextinguishable glory. The passion that impels their spirit is the love of excellence, and it rapidly assimilates them to the divine image of the perfection they adore.

Jehovah proves his existence by perpetually creating. The process has never ceased; at this moment, suns are throwing off nebulae, and these are hardening into worlds. Why should the immortal soul be dormant? Its Creator reposes never. Think you that Paul is at rest, and Newton idle amid the opening splendors of the universe? Growth in happiness lies in a flight from inertia to energy. God has given man the power of setting all things in motion for useful ends, and in the humble but diligent exercise of this prerogative consists our chiefest joy. The working soul is a spiritual hero, armed with sanctified valor, who ventures forward into the gulf for the disenthralment of mankind. He is fortified with strength more than human, and "through the impassable, paves a

road." On the contrary, the wicked servant who was cast into outer darkness was a *slothful* servant; indescribable remorse in the eternal world comported with the indolence and viciousness of his existence on earth. Constrained inactivity is the hell of the wicked, but beneficent toil is the heaven of the just.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### PERSEVERANCE;

#### OR, THE INVINCIBLE CHAMPION.

It is said, in Eccl. 11: 4, "He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap." We suppose the wise preacher in these words to mean, that he who leans on the adventitious circumstances of the moment for his support,—who takes the exception instead of established law for the rule of his life,—follows the fickle winds and fleeting clouds rather than the guidance of clearly defined and eternal principles, will sow without wisdom and reap without gain. We are encompassed by a cloud of witnesses confirmatory of this doctrine. The spiritual genealogy of many persons, proves their descent in direct line from Reuben, of whom the dying father said, "unstable as water, thou shalt not excel."

We proceed to show that perseverance is the master impulse of the firmest souls; the discipline of the noblest virtues; and the guaranty of acquisitions the most invigorating in their use and inestimable in their worth.

First of all, let us observe how that perseverance is the main-spring which perpetually impels the firmest souls. Ability for stupendous toil is lodged in every human spirit, a grand gift from the God of nature; but only the persevering worker knows what this latent power is able to achieve, and he can tell only when he has done his very best. Every kind and degree of excellence is food for the spirit which must be earn-



ed by the sweat of the brow. Two things are demanded as prerequisites to success; the aspiring competitor in the race of life must early fix his eye in a specific direction, and then with unfaltering step must he press constantly towards the chosen goal.

“Do not, for one repulse, forego the purpose  
That you resolved to effect.”

The imperial heroes who rule over the opinions of their fellow men for good or ill, are victory-organized; they march towards the execution of their purpose, as if they were intent on the conquest of a world. With a bold front and piercing eye, they are repelled by no obstacles, and entertain not the slightest doubt as to a final triumph; days and nights, like their fortune, health, and everything dear in existence, they consecrate to the success of their particular enterprise. As with hooks of steel, they grapple the most stubborn difficulties, and relax neither hand nor foot so long as there remains one vital energy in their will. A fine instance and illustration under this head, is presented in the person and life of our distinguished countryman, John Ledyard. He was born in Groton, Connecticut, in the year 1751. Early left without a father, with no patron but poverty and his own brave purpose, he resolved to educate his mind and explore the world. Having remained at Dartmouth College as long as he could afford, he went down to the bank of the Connecticut river, felled a majestic tree, and fashioned its trunk into a canoe, fifty feet long and three wide. His craft is launched, and alone with a bearskin for a covering, he pursues his lonely voyage a hundred and forty miles over dangerous falls and through a savage wilderness from Hanover to Hartford. Having found no encouragement at home in clerical pursuits, he embarks as a common sailor, and soon after enlists in the British army at Gibraltar, “thinking the profession of a soldier well suited to a man of honor and enterprise.” Escaping thence in about a

year thereafter, we find him returned to his native State. But he remains but a short time, as dependence upon the bounty of his friends is too intolerable to one of his lofty spirit. With poverty staring him in the face, he goes again before the mast and works his way to Plymouth, England, whence, by begging by the roadside, he at length reaches London. It was just at this period that Captain Cook was preparing for his third and last voyage round the world. Ledyard embarked with the great circumnavigator, and performed the whole voyage. This immense undertaking accomplished, he remains two years in the navy, but refuses to fight against his native country, and returns to Hartford in 1782. In great pecuniary distress, he goes to Philadelphia. Robert Morris replenishes his purse, and gives him letters of introduction to eminent merchants in Europe. Shortly after he is at Cadiz, and being again baffled in his design, he journeys to Paris for aid. But his energetic temperament will not allow him to remain idle long. "As fate," says his biographer, "seemed to throw difficulties insurmountable in the way of a passage by sea, he bethought himself of the only expedient by which a part of his original design with respect to a passage to the North West coast might be carried into execution; and that was, to travel by land through the northern regions of Europe and Asia, crossing over Behring's Strait to the American continent." Such an expedient could be adopted, only by the boldest adventurer. Alone and unfriended, he set out, at the most dreary season of the year, and in seven weeks had travelled from Hamburg to Copenhagen and thence to St. Petersburg, walking more than two hundred miles per week, through Sweden and Finland to the icy heart of Russia. But the haughty empress of the north is jealous of this hardy American youth traversing her dominions. He is forbidden to cross the frontier nearest his home, and compelled to return. Behold him crushed under new trials away there in the remotest snows and wilderness of Siberia. "What, alas, shall I do,"

exclaims he, "for I am miserably prepared for this unlooked for delay. By remaining here through the winter, I cannot expect to resume my march until May, which will be eight months. My funds! I have but two long frozen stages more, and I shall be beyond the want, or aid of money, until, emerging from the deep deserts, I gain the American Atlantic States; and then, thy glowing climates, Africa, explored, I will lay me down, and claim my little portion of the globe I have viewed; may it not be before. How many of the noble minded have been subsidiary to me, or to my enterprises; yet that meagre demon, Poverty, has travelled with me hand in hand over half the globe, and witnessed what—the tale I will not unfold! Ye children of wealth and idleness, what a profitable commerce might be made between us. A little of my toil might better brace your bodies, give spring to mind and zest to enjoyment; and a very little of that wealth which you scatter around you, would put it beyond the power of anything but death to oppose my kindred greetings with all on earth, that bear the stamp of man."

But that noble heart is not yet entirely overwhelmed in despair. Persevering still, Ledyard returns through Poland, and at length reaches London again. His services are immediately sought by the African Association. Being asked when he would set out—"to-morrow morning"—is the characteristic reply. In a month, he is in Alexandria, and in less than a week more, at Grand Cairo, only the starting point of his arduous expedition. From Egypt, he who had traversed America, Europe, Asia, and Africa, and had persevered further than any other man under all sorts of privations, wrote to his mother in the following strain, "Truly is it written, that the ways of God are past finding out, and his decrees unsearchable. Is the Lord thus great? So also is he good. I am an instance of it. I have trampled the world under my feet, laughed at fear, and derided danger. Through millions of fierce savages, over parching deserts, the freezing north, the

everlasting ice, and stormy seas, have I passed without harm. How good is my God! What rich subjects have I for praise, love, and adoration!" Soon after writing these lines, the devout and noble Ledyard died, towards the end of November, 1788. He was then in the thirty-eighth year of his age. The day of his death, and the place of his burial are unknown, but what an example of perseverance did he leave the world!

"When Nature sinks, as oft she may,  
Through long liv'd pressure of obscure distress,  
Still to be strenuous, for the bright reward,  
And in the soul, admit of no decay—  
Brook no continuance of weak-mindedness—  
Great is the glory, for the strife is great!"

Invariably will you find perseverance exemplified as the radical principle in every truly great character. It facilitates, perfects, and consolidates the execution of the plan conceived, and renders profitable its results when attained. By continuing to advance steadily in the same way, light constantly increases, obstacles disappear, efficient habits are confirmed, experience is acquired, the use of the best means is reduced to easy action, and success becomes more sure. Fancy of the wildest and boldest character united to intellect the most clear and ample, constituting a tone of mind ethereal and potent to the highest degree, will yet possess but little utility until it is rectified and energized by the soul of unflinching persistency. It was by perseverance that a little stream, emanating beyond the Rocky Mountains, cut its way through hills, prairies, ledges, soils of every kind, and a continent of vast extent, a channel of four thousand miles stretching from the Lake of the Woods to the Gulf of Mexico. And so an industrious individual, however obscure he may be at the outset, who early fixes his resolute heart and will on a specific enterprise, and thenceforth perpetually aims at its accomplishment, is almost certain ultimately to succeed. For a long time he may have

to grapple with the many-headed coil of Lernean serpents; and contend with it for life. The ascent may be abrupt and exceedingly difficult, but by persevering toil the mountain steeps eventually are scaled. The heroical spirit goes forth resolved the most rugged path to traverse; not with "manifold motions making little speed," but by a direct progress wisely projected and constantly pursued. "Where the man climbed, on sharp flinty precipices, slippery, abysmal; in darkness, seen by no kindred eye,—amid the brood of dragons; and the heart, many times, was like to fail within him, in his loneliness, in his extreme need; yet he climbed, and climbed, gluing his footsteps in his blood; and now, behold, Hyperion-like he has scaled it, and on the summit shakes his glittering shafts of war! What a scene and new kingdom for him; all bathed in auroral radiance of Hope; far-stretching, solemn, joyful: what wild Memnon's music, from the depths of Nature, comes toning through the soul raised suddenly out of strangling death into victory and life!"

Chrysostom bemoans the general want of perseverance, and says that "sloth is wont to spoil us, and to yield us much pain." That man is destined to be of but little service to mankind who fears to soar or is ashamed to toil.

"If we shall stand still,  
In fear our motion will be mock'd or carp'd at,  
We should take root here where we sit, or sit  
State statues only."

Says Barrow, "A noble heart will disdain to subsist like a drone upon the honey gathered by others' labor; like a vermin to filch its food out of the public granary; or like a shark to prey on the lesser fry; but will one way or other earn his subsistence; for he that doth not earn, can hardly own his bread, as St. Paul implieth, when he saith, "Them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread." The

pledge of the Redeemer to the persevering disciple is, "He that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God." He shall be the most useful ornament by his substantial graces, and the chiefest support by his symmetrical example. He shall be honored with a prominent position, because his solid and useful character is both high and firm.

In the second place, the practice of perseverance is the discipline of the noblest virtues. To run well, we must run to the end. It is not the fighting, but the conquering that gives a hero his title to renown. How shall this end be attained?

It is very certain that no one can accomplish much without the habitual exercise of mental concentration. Says an old writer, "Industry doth not consist merely in action; for that is incessant in all persons, our mind being a restless thing, never abiding in a total cessation from thought or design; being like a ship in the sea, if not steered to some good purpose by reason, yet tossed by the waves of fancy, or driven by the winds of temptation somewhither. But the direction of our mind to some good end, without roving or flinching, in a straight and steady course, drawing after it our active powers in execution thereof, doth constitute industry." Men who thus have their mental powers under good control and constantly directed to some lofty end, acquire fresh vigor from every apparent defeat; and, like Antaeus, they rebound from a momentary fall with renewed elasticity. They are quick to act, knowing that

"The flighty purpose never is o'ertook,  
Unless the deed go with it."

In order successfully to persevere, one must not only be prompt in deciding what to do, but he must be energetic in the use of means that are the best. All great schemes of usefulness unite, in the happiest degree, sagacious reason and generous adventure. The strongest passion of a true man is to "scorn delight and love laborious days." He goes forth to

the battle of life, as the ancient hero invaded the country of his foes, burning the boats behind him, and thus making it necessary to conquer or perish. He struggles on to the last gasp, and even in the agonies of death cries out to his comrades, like the indomitable Lawrence, "Don't give up the ship!"

In a German fairy tale, called the "Sleeping Beauty in the Wood," the knight who is destined to set the lovely prisoner free, has first to cut his path through the forest before he can even approach the castle in which she lies slumbering; and he never would have succeeded, had it not been for an enchanted sword given him by a powerful friend. It is believed, that in this allegory, the Sleeping Beauty meant a prize worthy of a pure and heroic heart; and the sword which none of the trees could resist, symbolized a high and noble perseverance, possessed by him who was destined to win and wear the honors of an invincible champion.

The most profitable and praiseworthy genius in the world is, untiring industry; and, in the vocabulary of him who possesses this attribute, "there is no such word as fail." Many persons are obliged to commence the voyage of life against both wind and tide. These are greatly tempted to complain of their hard fortune; some are always just ready to give up, and for that very reason are both helpless and good for nothing. Whereas, if they would only persevere with boldness, hard as it is to work up stream all life long, they would find abundant reward at last. As successful trips are made up our rivers as down. Let us but put forth as many wise efforts, as we indulge foolish wishes, and we shall certainly be vastly more enriched thereby.

Lord Bacon quotes our text in one of his works, and on it remarks that "A man must make his opportunity, as oft as find it." Timorous action and melancholy complaints are feeble antagonists against the armed resistance of misfortune, penury and wrong; it is dull tranquillity arrayed against pas-

sion ; summer dust against the whirlwind ; the weight of gunpowder against its explosive force. So long as we are not absolutely bound and imprisoned by the stern law of impossibility, despair can never constitute any part of our duty. While there remains a single ray of hope, or one foothold for another struggle, we are under the highest obligation to pray, and once more try. The day was waning on the field of Marengo, and the battle nearly lost, when Napoleon, observed a particular post the capture of which would decide the contest. Calling the young and brave Dessaix to his side, he inquired, "Can you carry that point?" "I will try," was the laconic answer. He did achieve what in desperation he undertook, and fell at the moment of victory. The conquest of Italy, the subjugation of Europe, the imperial power of the greatest captain of modern times, for weal or woe, all grew out of that little phrase, "I will try."

Emerson recorded good practical truth in the following remarks : "If our young men miscarry in their first enterprises, they lose all heart. If the young merchant fails, men say he is *ruined*. If the finest genius studies at one of our colleges, and is not installed in an office within one year afterwards in the cities or suburbs of Boston or New York, it seems to his friends and to himself that he is right in being disheartened and in complaining the rest of his life. A sturdy lad from New Hampshire or Vermont, who in turn tries all the professions, who *teams it, farms it, peddles*, keeps a school, preaches, edits a newspaper, goes to Congress, buys a township, and so forth, in successive years, and always, like a cat, falls on his feet, is worth a hundred of these city dolls. He walks abreast with his days, and feels no shame in not 'studying a profession,' for he does not postpone his life, but lives already. He has not one chance, but a hundred chances."

It is not a single charge that usually wins the field, but repeated onsets made from different points. It is lawful for the man of enterprise frequently to change the means he employs,



but he should never for a moment forget the specific end designated for him to attain. A rolling stone gathers no moss; and a man who often changes his business is most likely to remain poor. Said the sagacious Richard,

"I never saw an oft removed tree,  
Nor yet an oft removed family,  
That throve so well as those that settled be."

There is a great deal of meaning in that other maxim, "Keep thy shop, and thy shop will keep thee." Did you ever know a person to stick to any kind of business, no matter how humble and unpropitious, ten years, who did not thrive upon it? It may have been every way bad and exceedingly discouraging for a long time, but if he clung to his own particular business earnestly and honestly, and meddled with nothing else; if he struggled good naturedly to keep his head above the water, and fought his persevering way through sunshine and storm, in each equally undismayed, he always came out happy and rich enough in the end—didn't he?

"A certain amount of opposition is a great help to a man. Kites rise against, not with the wind. Even a head wind is better than nothing. No man ever worked his voyage anywhere in a dead calm. The best wind for anything, in the long run, is a wide wind. If it blows aft, how is he to get back?

"Let no man wax pale, therefore, because of opposition. Opposition is what he wants, and must have, to be good for anything. Hardship is the native soil of manhood and self-reliance. He that cannot abide the storm without flinching or quailing, strips himself in the sunshine, and lays down by the wayside, to be overlooked and forgotten.

"He who but braces himself up to the struggle, when the winds blow, gives up when they are done, and falls asleep in the stillness that follows."

It is no use for one to stand in the shade and complain that

the sun does not shine upon him. He must come out resolutely on the hot and dusty field where all are compelled to antagonize with stubborn difficulties, and pertinaciously strive until he conquers, if he would deserve to be crowned. He must be willing cheerfully to sacrifice everything to this one design, like the ancient statuary who, seeing the fire of the furnace, wherein he melted bronze to cast his statue, about to become extinguished, cast in his furniture, the bed of his children, and even the frame-work of his house, consenting to consume everything rather than that his great work should remain incomplete.

Most persons relinquish their pursuit at the very moment when they are most bound to persevere; they are already near the mouth of the cave, and if they would only press on a little further they would soon see daylight. Remember that it is the last blow that fells the tree. Many preplaced weights may have burdened the elephant, but it is the last ounce laid on that breaks his back. A strong fortification is won, not by haphazard shots which wound it in a thousand different places and pierce it through in none; but by directing the battery to some one point in persevering attack, until an avenue is shattered down for victorious hosts to enter and take possession. Iron, and even the hardest steel, is blunted on rock by a single blow; but the softest water, by continually falling in the same place, scoops a hollow in adamant, and bores its way through flint and granite. A little worm, starting at the bottom of the Pacific Ocean, by persevering toil, builds up vast islands of coral, against which the staunchest ships are dashed, and whereon whole colonies of men may live. Examples abound everywhere, suggesting that the melody most grateful to the ear of nature's God, is "the far-heard panting of divine endeavor."

It is impossible to over-estimate the amount of success that may be achieved to one's own fortunes and the common weal by the single act of a devoted hero, at some critical moment

when ordinary chieftains quail. Take the case of the liberator of Switzerland, as celebrated in the verse of Montgomery.

"Make way for liberty!"—he cried;  
Made way for liberty, and died!—

It must not be: this day, this hour,  
Annihilates the oppressor's power!  
All Switzerland is in the field,  
She will not fly, she cannot yield—  
She must not fall; her better fate  
Here gives her an immortal date.  
Few were the numbers she could boast;  
But every freeman was a host,  
And felt as though himself were he,  
On whose sole arm hung victory.

It did depend on one indeed;  
Behold him—Arnold Winkelried!  
There sounds not to the tramp of fame  
The echo of a nobler name.  
Unmarked he stood amid the throng,  
In rumination deep and long,  
Till you might see, with sudden grace,  
The very thought come o'er his face;  
And, by the motion of his form,  
Anticipate the bursting storm;  
And, by the uplifting of his brow,  
Tell where the bolt would strike, and how.

But 'twas no sooner thought than done!  
The field was in a moment won:—  
"Make way for liberty!" he cried,  
Then ran, with arms extended wide,  
As if his dearest friend to clasp;  
Ten spears he swept within his grasp:  
"Make way for liberty!" he cried,  
Their keen points met from side to side;  
He bowed amongst them like a tree,  
And thus made way for liberty.

Swift to the breach his comrades fly;  
"Make way for liberty!" they cry,  
And through the Austrian phalanx dart,  
As rushed the spears through Arnold's heart;

While instantaneous as his fall,  
Rout; ruin, panic, scattered all :  
An earthquake could not overthrow  
A city with a surer blow.

Thus Switzerland again was free ;  
Thus death made way for liberty !

The character and conquest of the invincible champion is ever the same. A Lacedaemonian died while writing with his own blood on a rock—"Sparta has conquered !"

But, O, there is an illustration higher and better than any derived from mere earthly annals. Jesus veiled his glory in the skies ; shrouded divinity in mortality, and, with godhead and humanity coalesced in his person, entered the lists with more than mortal strife against the powers of hell. He drank the bitter cup with sublimer resignation than the sages of earth ever knew ; contended victoriously where finite champions must inevitably have been destroyed ; fell, like the strong man, destroying his foes by his death ; persevered on our behalf in all the fearful descent from the august throne of the Eternal to the stony floor of the cold and gloomy sepulchre ; that Hope's sweet fountain might gush up for mankind in Golgotha, and Salvation plant her banner with immortal triumph at the portal of the conquered tomb.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### PERSEVERANCE.—(CONTINUED.)

IN the preceding chapter, it was said that perseverance is the master impulse of the firmest souls, and the discipline of the noblest virtues. Herein we proceed to show that the early possession and active exercise of this quality, is the guaranty of acquisitions the most invigorating in their use and the most valuable in their intrinsic worth.

The diligent pupil in the school of stern necessity, is often the most successful competitor in the race of life, and, as he runs, most enjoys "the sober certainty of waking bliss." They become seasonably acquainted with realities, and are skilful in assigning to each object its relative worth. They are not of the class who "misuse the bounteous Pan, and think the god's amiss; but are contented with a frugal livelihood, provided they can enjoy the luxury of being constantly employed. Herein consists that noble and virtuous discipline to which we have before referred, but which on the former occasion we had not sufficient time fully to describe. "What of all things belonging to virtue is not laborious?" inquired Chrysostom. "God hath parted virtue with us, and neither hath left all to be in us, lest we should be elated to pride, nor himself hath taken all, lest we should decline to sloth. Indeed the very nature and essence of virtue doth consist in the most difficult and painful efforts of soul; in the extirpating rooted prejudices and notions from our understanding; in bending a stiff will, and rectifying crooked inclinations; in overruling a rebellious temper; in curbing eager and importunate appetites;

in taming wild passions ; in withstanding violent temptations ; in surmounting many difficulties, and sustaining many troubles ; in struggling with various unruly lusts within, and encountering many stout enemies abroad, which assault our reason, and *war against our soul* ; in such exercises its very being lieth ; its birth, its growth, its substance dependeth on them ; so that from any discontinuance or remission of them it would soon decay, languish away, and perish. If travelling in a rough way ; if travelling up a steep hill ; if combatting stern foes, and fighting sharp battles ; if crossing the grain of our nature and desires ; if continually holding a strict rein over all our parts and powers, be things of labor and trouble, then greatly such is the practice of virtue."

When enthusiasm of design is associated with sobriety of calculation, and both are crowned with industrious resolve, success must be the result. It was the happy combination of these qualities that rendered Wilberforce so well qualified to perform the duties of his great mission. Says an English writer, "It required all his perseverance, all his enthusiasm, all that faculty of resistance to the petty harassing difficulties which eternally rose up against him, increasing as he advanced ; that happy constitution of mind which kept him still fresh and sanguine in the midst of disappointments ; that fortunate blindness of zeal which enabled him *not* to see impediments of a kind which would have seriously interfered with the *amour propre* of other men ; that enduring faith which sustained him through good and evil ; and that vanity—for vanity he had, supreme and towering—which carried him like a butterfly to the end. Wilberforce was the only man who could have worked on in Parliament for the abolition with the requisite one-ideal energy. He was not a man for a crisis, but a man for a continuance ; a great man for a committee—a great sifter—a great sifter of small facts—a man not to be put down by fatigue so long as it bore upon his own paramount object—a man who had always a quantity of papers and correspond-

ence in his pocket about cruelties and atrocities, which he whipped out and read at every opportunity—who never met you in the street, but he had a new fact to tell you about the horrors of slavery—who contrived to insinuate that one subject into every company and every topic of conversation—and who grew so completely identified with it, that, whenever he made his appearance, or wherever you fell in with his name, he at once brought the question to your mind, and set you thinking about the poor blacks. All this made Wilberforce, personally, very troublesome; and, in spite of the toleration which the amenity of his manners secured for him, people often tried to keep clear of him as well as they could without offence. *But this was the only way in which the abolition could have been carried.*

“Attempt the end, and never stand to doubt;  
Nothing’s so hard, but search will find it out.”

The difficulties which Columbus had to encounter, and the stupendous results of his perseverance, are well understood. He traversed an unknown sea until distrust and despair drove his crew to mutiny. The heavens darkened over him and the angry billows howled around; all the omens were inauspicious, and any heart less firm and persevering than his would have ordered the ship about. But he continues to watch and pray at the helm, until the storm subsides, signs of land appear, and a new world is found.

“Perseverance is a Roman virtue,  
That wins each godlike act, and plucks success  
Even from the spear-proof crest of rugged danger.”

The great utility of perseverance is frequently illustrated in the departments of practical art and science, as well as in the higher walks of religious enterprise. Coleridge thought that “the most extraordinary and the best attested instance of enthusiasm existing in conjunction with perseverance, is related

of the *founder* of the Foley family. This man, who was a fiddler, living near Stourbridge, was often witness of the immense labor and loss of time caused by dividing the rods of iron necessary in making nails. The discovery of the process called splitting, in works called splitting-mills, was first made in Sweden, and the consequences of this advance in art were most disastrous to the manufacturers of iron about Stourbridge. Foley the fiddler was shortly missed from his accustomed rounds, and was not again seen for many years. He had mentally resolved to ascertain by what means the process of splitting of bars of iron was accomplished; and, without communicating his intention to a single human being, he proceeded to Hull, and thence, without funds, worked his passage to the Swedish iron-port. Arrived in Sweden, he begged and fiddled his way to the iron-foundries, where, after a time, he became a universal favorite with the workmen; and, from the apparent entire absence of intelligence or anything like ultimate object, he was received into the works, to every part of which he had access. He took the advantage thus offered, and having stored his memory with observations and all the combinations, he disappeared from among his kind friends as he had appeared, no one knew whence or whither.

“On his return to England he communicated his voyage and its results to Mr. Knight and another person in the neighborhood, with whom he was associated, and by whom the necessary buildings were erected and machinery provided. When at length everything was prepared, it was found that the machinery would not act,—at all events, it did not answer the sole end of its erection—it would not split the bar of iron.

“Foley disappeared again, and it was concluded that shame and mortification at his failure had driven him away forever. Not so: again, though somewhat more speedily, he found his way to the Swedish iron-works, where he was received most joyfully, and, to make sure of their fiddler, he was lodged in the splitting-mill itself. Here was the very aim and end of



his life attained beyond his utmost hope. He examined the works, and very soon discovered the cause of his failure. He now made drawings or rude tracings, and, having abided an ample time to verify his observations, and to impress them clearly and vividly on his mind, he made his way to the port, and once more returned to England. This time he was completely successful, and by the results of his experience enriched himself and greatly benefited his countrymen."

These facts illustrate the divine declaration, that worldly minds, engaged in selfish and perishable enterprise, are wiser in their generation than the children of light. But what momentous considerations urge upon the friends of God the duty of careful observation and patient toil.

"Let us then be up and doing,  
With a heart for every fate;  
Still achieving, still pursuing,  
Learn to labor and to wait."

If wisdom is the head, and honesty the heart, energetic industry is the right hand of every exalted vocation; without which the shrewdest insight is blind, and the best intentions are abortive. An indolent and timid man is qualified for no important office, no high calling, no responsible station among men; he is a mere effigy of humanity, incumbering and annoying the world.

"Who's born for sloth? To some we find  
The ploughshare's annual toil assign'd;  
Some at the sounding anvil glow;  
Some the swift-sliding shuttle throw;  
Some, studious of the wind and tide,  
From pole to pole our commerce guide;  
While some, of genius more refin'd,  
With head and tongue assist mankind.  
In every rank, or great or small,  
'Tis industry supports us all."

Diligence is the mother of good luck, and the precursor to certain and abundant rewards.

“For Hercules himself must yield to odds;  
And many strokes, tho’ with a little axe,  
Hew down, and fell the hardest timber’d oak.”

Says an old and profound English divine, “To industrious study is to be ascribed the invention and perfection of all those arts whereby human life is civilized, and the world cultivated with numberless accommodations, ornaments, and beauties.

“All the comely, the stately, the pleasant and useful works which we do view with delight, or enjoy with comfort, industry did contrive them, industry did frame them.

“Industry reared those magnificent fabrics, and those commodious houses; it formed those goodly pictures and statues; it raised those convenient causeways, those bridges, those aqueducts; it planted those fine gardens with various flowers and fruits; it clothed those pleasant fields with corn and grass; it built those ships, whereby we plough the seas, reaping the commodities of foreign regions. It hath subjected all creatures to our command and service, enabling us to subdue the fiercest, to catch the wildest, to render the gentler sort most tractable and useful to us. It taught us, from the wool of the sheep, from the hair of the goat, from the labors of the silk-worm, to weave us clothes to keep us warm, to make us fine and gay. It helped us from the inmost bowels of the earth to fetch divers needful tools and utensils.

“It collected mankind into cities, and compacted them into orderly societies, and devised wholesome laws, under shelter whereof we enjoy safety and peace, wealth and plenty, mutual succor and defence, sweet conversation and beneficial commerce.

“It by meditation did invent all those sciences whereby our minds are enriched and ennobled, our manners are refined and polished, our curiosity is satisfied, our life is benefited.

“What is there which we admire, or wherein we delight, that pleaseth our mind, or gratifieth our sense, for the which we are not beholden to industry?

“Doth any country flourish in wealth, in grandeur, in prosperity? It must be imputed to industry, to the industry of its governors settling good order, to the industry of its people following profitable occupations; so did Cato, in that notable oration of his in Sallust, tell the Roman senate, that it was not by the force of their arms, but by the industry of their ancestors, that the commonwealth did arise to such a pitch of greatness. When sloth creepeth in, then all things corrupt and decay; then the public State doth sink into disorder, penury, and a disgraceful condition.”

Providence has clearly ordained, that the only path fit and salutary for man on earth, is the path of persevering fortitude—the unremitting struggle of deliberate self-preparation and humble but active reliance on divine aid. Such persons are the elect spirits, chosen to glorify God in serving mankind; they are the luminous expounders of heavenly designs, the predestined torch-bearers who transmit primitive wisdom and cheering promise from the beginning to the consummation of the world. Their sublime course here below was symbolized by what the observant child saw when he inquired,

“What is that, mother?

The eagle, my boy,  
Proudly careering his course of joy,  
Firm, in his own mountain vigor relying;  
Breasting the dark storm; the red bolt defying;  
His wing on the wind, and his eye on the sun,  
He swerves not a hair, but bears onward, right on.  
Boy, may the eagle's flight ever be thine;  
Onward, and upward, and true to the line.”

It was not the magnitude of the Grecian army, nor the martial skill of Achilles their leader, that conquered the great city of Troy, but the ten years of their perseverance. As Chris-

tians, we have fiercer foes to fight and nobler conquests to win, than had the armies of pagan nations. Let us remember the moral laws under which we live, and learn to use means as well as exercise faith. He who kneels in his field to pray, without weeding it; and he who assumes the attitude of devotion in his boat, without pulling the oar, will neither deserve nor receive the fulness of the divine blessing. Our hands must toil while our supplications ascend, if we hope to be heard with acceptance. Caratach, in Fletcher's *Bonduca*, when admonished to inquire into the mind of the god Andate, replies,

"His hidden meaning lies in our endeavors,  
Our valors are our best gods."

There is much truth in this. If you are a true man, you can work your way up in the world faster than any combination of knaves can lie you down. "Be just and fear not." Keep a pure conscience by being constantly employed in doing good; whether it blow hot or blow cold, never mind, press toward the mark. Pertinent and orthodox is the following exhortation by George A. Light :

Never doubt a righteous cause;  
Go ahead,  
Throw yourself completely in;  
Conscience shaping all your laws,  
Manfully, through thick and thin,  
Go ahead.

Do not ask who'll go with you;  
Go ahead:  
Numbers! spurn the coward's plea!  
If there be but one or two,  
Single handed though it be,  
Go ahead!

Though before you mountains rise,  
Go ahead:  
Scale them?—certainly you can:

Let them proudly dare the skies ;  
What are mountains to a man !  
Go ahead.

Though fierce waters round you dash :  
Go ahead ;  
Let no hardship baffle you :  
Though the heavens roar and flash,  
Still undaunted, firm and true,  
Go ahead.

The disciple of Christ has the highest motives to impel him in the path of exalted and urgent enterprise. What was the persisting energy which built the pyramids of Egypt, or the Chinese wall, conquered the old world in Alexander, or in Columbus discovered the new,—compared with the undertaking which through Christian instrumentality aims to enlighten and save the race of mankind? Surely we should not be weary in well doing, but be always abounding in the work of the Lord. Weariness, disappointment and despondency are incident to all persons, it is true ; but it is equally certain that under such circumstances we should never surrender ourselves to unmanly fears.

“ Sink not beneath imaginary sorrows ;  
Call to your aid your courage and your wisdom ;  
Think on the sudden change of human scenes ;  
Think on the mighty power of awful virtue ;  
Think on that Providence that guards the good.”

We are bound to hold on, and hold out in the ways of God and duty, in the absence of all outward encouragements, and in the face of all outward discouragements. It is this spirit of indomitable perseverance that crowns all worthy heroes. “ Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” If you have begun in the Spirit, do not end in the flesh. Let consistency and virtuous activity be your chief glory. Be not a child of God in the morning, and a child of the devil at night. Neither be neglectful of your soul,

nor recreant to the Saviour to whom, it is hoped, you have consecrated the best services of your life. Follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, though others choose to follow the prophet who deceives and the beast that destroys.

Enough, perhaps, has already been adduced to show, that upright perseverance is the guaranty of acquisitions the most invigorating and valuable. In all such labor there is the greatest profit. Says Barrow, "Let us consider, that industry doth afford a lasting comfort, deposited in the memory and conscience of him that practiseth it. It will ever, upon his reviewing the passages of his life, be sweet to him to behold in them testimonies and monuments of his diligence; it will please him to consider, that he hath lived to purpose, having done somewhat considerable; that he hath made an advantageous use of his time; that he hath well husbanded the talents committed to him; that he hath accomplished (in some measure) the intents of God's bounty, and made some return for his excellent gifts. What comfort, indeed, can any man have, yea, how sore remorse must he feel, in reflecting upon a life spent in unfruitful and unprofitable idleness?"

"Hope doth ever wait on industry: and what is more delightful than hope? This is the incentive, the support, the condiment of all honest labor; in virtue whereof the husbandman toileth, the merchant trudgeth, the scholar ploddeth, the soldier dareth with alacrity and courage, not resenting any pains, nor regarding any hazards, which attend their undertakings: this the holy apostles tell us did enable them with joy to sustain all their painful work and hazardous warfare; enjoining us also as to *work with fear*, so to *rejoice in hope*."

Christ has never said unto us wait, without at the same time commanding us to work; in the gospel, watchfulness and industry are inseparably conjoined. Whatever in one portion of Holy Scripture is called the gift of God, will in other portions be stated as the result of industry. What God said to Joshua expresses the general mode of the divine proceeding,

"Only be thou strong and courageous—that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest." Whatever we are directed to pray for, we are also exhorted to work for; we are not permitted to mock Jehovah, asking that of him which we deem not worth our pains to acquire. Says an old writer, "Hence God in all such cases, when we do need any good thing, is said to be our helper and succorer to the obtaining it; which doth imply that we must coöperate with him, and join our forces to those which he doth afford; so that as we can do nothing without him, so he will do nothing without us; yea, so that sometime we are said also to help God; *Curses ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.* If ever God doth perform all without human labor conspiring, it is only in behalf of those who are ready to do their best, but unable to do anything, being overpowered by the insuperable difficulty of things; but he never doth act miracles, or control nature; he never doth stretch forth his arm, or interpose special power, in favor of wilful and affected sluggards.

"Indeed each virtue hath its peculiar difficulty, needing much labor to master it: *Faith* is called *the work of faith*; and it is no such easy work as may be imagined, to bring our hearts unto a thorough persuasion about truths crossing our sensual conceits, and controlling our peevish humors; unto a perfect submission of our understanding, and resignation of our will to whatever God teacheth or prescribeth; to a firm resolution of adhering to that profession, which exacteth of us so much pains, and exposeth us to so many troubles.

"Charity is also a laborious exercise of many good works; and he that will practise it must in divers ways labor hardly: he must labor in voiding from his soul many dispositions deeply radicated therein by nature, opinion, and custom; envy, forwardness, stubbornness, perverse and vain selfishness; from whence wrath, revenge, spite, and malice do spring forth. He

must labor in effectual performance of all good offices, and in catching all occasions of doing good ; he must exert that *labor of love*, whereof St. Paul doth speak ; he must (as that holy apostle directeth, not only in precept, but by his own practice) work with his own hands, that he may supply the wants of his neighbor.

“ Hope itself (which one would think, when grounded well, should be a no less easy than pleasant duty) doth need much labor to preserve it safe, straight, and stable, among the many waves and billows of temptation assaying to shake and subvert it ; whence a *patience of hope* is recommended to us ; and we so often are exhorted to hold it fast, to keep it sure, firm, and unshaken to the end.”

The apostle Paul has illustrated this theme with many masterly delineations. But in every picture, he shows us the Christian hero on the stretch—all energy—every faculty in urgent pursuit ; nothing diverting him from the glorious crown in prospect, towards which with incessant effort he urges his way. And the most solemnly important consideration on this subject is, that the utmost watchfulness and perseverance we can employ will only just barely bring us to the goal and reward of eternal joy. If the righteous are *scarcely* saved, where will the ungodly appear ? Let us awake to righteousness and sin not. Forgetting the things behind, and reaching forth to the things which are before, let us press toward the mark and prize of the upward calling. Being at peace with God and man, let us trust and not be afraid. In the language of Rev. James Hamilton of London : “ Having made a wise and deliberate selection of a business, go on with it—go through with it. Persevering mediocrity is much more respectable, and unspeakably more useful, than talented inconstancy. In the heathery turf you will often find a plant chiefly remarkable for its peculiar roots : from the main stem down to the minutest fibre, you will find them all abruptly terminate as if shorn or bitten off ; and the silly superstition of the country people



alleges that once on a time it was a plant of singular potency for healing all sorts of maladies, and therefore the great enemy of man in his malignity bit off the roots in which its virtues resided. This plant, with this quaint history, is a very good emblem of many well-meaning but little-effecting people. The efficacy of every good work lies in its completion; and all their good works terminate abruptly, and are left off unfinished. The devil frustrates their efficacy by cutting off their ends; their unprofitable history is made up of plans and projects, schemes of usefulness that were never gone about, and magnificent undertakings that were never carried forward; societies that were set a going, then left to shift for themselves, and forlorn beings who for a time were taken up and instructed, and just when they were beginning to show symptoms of improvement, were cast on the world again. But others there are, who, before beginning to build, count the cost, and having collected their materials, and laid their foundations deep and broad, go on to rear their structure, indifferent to more tempting schemes and sublime enterprises subsequently suggested. The man who provides a home for a poor neighbor, is a greater benefactor of the poor than he who lays the foundation of a stately almshouse and never finishes a single apartment. The persevering teacher who guides one child into the saving knowledge of Christ and leads him on to established habits of piety, is a more useful man than his friend who gathers in a room-full of ragged children, after a few weeks of waning zeal, turns them all adrift on the streets again. The patriot who set his heart on abolishing the slave-trade, and after twenty years of rebuffs and revilings, of tantalized hope and disappointed effort, at last succeeded—achieved a greater work than if he had set afloat all possible schemes of philanthropy, and then left them, one after the other, to sink or swim. So short is life, that we can afford to lose none of it in abortive undertakings; and once we are assured that a given work is one which is worth our while to do, it is true wisdom to set

about it instantly, and once we have begun it, it is true economy to finish it."

Honest desires and persevering efforts are sure to render the path to success both plain and easy. While the slothful sits down by the side of his hedge of thorns in despondency; the righteous man, intent on doing good to the greatest possible amount, goes forth like a giant rejoicing to run a race, and if he does not find a way open before him he will surely make one.

"Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men." The energetic and persisting worker for God and man, shall stand—as Joseph, Nehemiah, and Daniel stood, before the mighty of earth, themselves crowned with the greatest might. The spirit of active enterprise, even without godliness, often paves the way to worldly emolument. Pharaoh chose Joseph's brethren, as "men of activity," to be rulers of his cattle. Jeroboam owed his elevation in Solomon's house to his "industrious" habits. But when a man "serves the Lord in fervency of spirit," faithfully improving his time and talents in view of future and eternal retribution, he shall stand before the King of kings with unspeakable honor, with unclouded glory, and amid the acclamations of a rejoicing universe shall hear the language of commendation and recompense—"Well done! good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Child of earth and earthly sorrows—child of God and immortal hopes—arise from thy sadness, gird up the loins of thy mind, and with unfaltering energy press towards thy rest and reward on high, singing as you go—

"Never give up, it is wiser and better  
Always to hope than once to despair;  
Fling off the load of doubt's cankering fetter  
And break the dark spell of tyrannical care.

Never give up! or the burthen may sink you—  
Providence kindly has mingled the cup,  
And in all trials or troubles, bethink you,  
The watchword of life must be, Never give up!

Never give up! there are chances and changes,  
Helping the hopeful a hundred to one;  
And, through the chaos High wisdom arranges  
Ever success—if you'll only hope on.  
Never give up! for the wisest is boldest,  
Knowing that Providence mingles the cup;  
And of all maxims the best as the oldest,  
Is the true watchword of Never give up!

Never give up! though the grape-shot may rattle,  
Or the full thunder cloud over you burst;  
Stand like a rock, and the storm or the battle  
Little shall harm you, though doing their worst.  
Never give up! if adversity presses,  
Providence wisely has mingled the cup;  
And the best counsel in all your distresses  
Is the stout watchword of Never give up!"

## CHAPTER XV.

### SINCERITY;

#### OR, THE IRRESISTIBLE PERSUADER.

SAYS Solomon, in Proverbs 15: 26, "The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord: but the words of the pure are pleasant words." The translation of the latter phrase is perhaps more literal, and more clearly expressive of the wise man's thought,—“the words of the pure are words of pleasantness.” We take the meaning to be this: the sincerity of a true man so pervades his whole spirit and beautifies his language, that his society is the most attractive; his speech the most forcible; and his influence the most benign. Let us develop and enforce these three points.

In the first place, the companionship of the sincere is most attractive to all the meritorious. Polybius has said that “Of all the divinities that nature has discovered to the mind of man, the most beautiful is Truth.” We may add, that devotion at her shrine tends to adorn the intellect as well as ennoble the heart; such worship renders the devotee attractive, and inspires him with the sublimest zeal. We wonder at the artist, who patiently sits in his darkened studio year after year, and with delicate hair-lines adds tint after tint to the slowly elaborated masterpiece. But this assiduity is easily explained by the fact, that his prolonged labor is his intensest delight. His love of the beautiful and true in art is the spring of his devotion, the inspiration of his excellence, and the guarantee of success. A sincere desire to improve one's self for wide and exalted ends will illuminate even a dull intellect,

and make the aspirant attractive to all around. Glowing with a passionate fondness for truth the soul expands to receive that which it adores, and loving to stand in the sun, it assimilates itself to the transparent purity that surrounds it. The fairest of the graces is sincerity. They who truly love the highest duty and the holiest law, go from the sweet charities of friendship and recondite pursuits, still more ardently to consecrate themselves to the happiness of mankind; and returning from the weariness of public toil, enjoy private intimacy with greater delight.

“It is not in the power  
Of Painting or of Sculpture to express  
Aught so divine as the fair form of Truth!  
The creatures of their art may catch the eye  
But her sweet nature captivates the soul.”

The sincere lover of peace and righteousness verifies to himself and all the world that “He is a freeman whom the truth makes free, and all are slaves beside.” His latent virtues render him fascinating, and his purity of purpose is a constant source of solace and defence. Says Barrow, “A man that is conscious to himself of a solid worth and virtue, of having honest intentions, of having performed good deeds, is satisfied with the fruits of inward comfort and outward approbation, which they do yield; he therefore will scorn to seek the bettering himself by the discredit of others; he will not by so mean a practice adulterate that worth, in which he feeleth sufficient complacence; he rather doth like that others should enjoy their due commendation, as justifying his own claim thereto; he willingly payeth it, because he may justly demand it; and because withholding it from another may prejudice his own right thereto: but he that is sensible of no good qualities in himself, that is conscious of no worthy actions that he hath done, to breed a satisfaction of mind, or build a reputation upon, would please himself in making others as little better than

himself as he can, would ground a kind of credit upon the ruins and rubbish of another's fame. When he knoweth he cannot shine by his own light, he would seem less obscure by eclipsing the brightness of others, and shutting out the day from about him; conceiving that all things look alike in the dark, and that bad appeareth not bad where no good is near.

“As also a good man liketh worth and virtue, because they resemble what he discerneth in himself; so evil men hate them, because they do not find themselves masters of them; they are like the fox, who said the grapes were sour, because he could not reach them; and that the hare was dry meat, because he could not catch her. A detractor therefore is always a bad man, and wanteth those good qualities which he would disparage.”

It is a principle never to be overlooked, that those who have the scantiest merits of their own are the least disposed to recognize and reward the merits of others. Because they are insincere, they assume false appearances, and can never be relied on, since their real intentions can never be understood. On the contrary, the sincere man always is as he appears, and may honorably assert,

“I cannot hide what I am: I must be  
Sad when I have a cause, and smile at no man's  
Jests; eat when I have stomach, and wait for  
No man's leisure; sleep when I am drowsy,  
And tend on no man's business; laugh when I  
Am merry, and claw no man in his humor.”

Says Isaiah, “Behold thou desirest truth in the inward part.” Morally we are not to be like oarsmen in a boat, looking one way and pulling another. We are not to gaze heaven-ward in our sacred professions, and work hell-ward in our daily business and conversation. Let our hearts be sincere before God, remembering that counterfeited piety is double impiety. The plainer the diamond is, the greater is its worth;

and the more purely lucid the heart is, the more doth God value this best jewel on earth. A little sterling gold, though obscured, is far better than a great deal of burnished and ostentatious brass. A sincere heart is God's most precious currency, coined from the bullion of divine grace, and bears a premium throughout the universe.

He who sang the Course of Time, finely described the millennial day when this grace universally prevailed.

"Love took the place of law; where'er you met  
 A man, you met a friend, sincere and true.  
 Kind looks foretold as kind a heart within;  
 Words as they sounded, meant; and promises  
 Were made to be performed. Thrice happy days!  
 Philosophy was sanctified, and saw  
 Perfection which she thought a fable long.  
 Revenge his dagger dropped, and kissed the hand  
 Of Mercy: Anger cleared his cloudy brow,  
 And sat with Peace; Envy grew red, and smiled  
 On Worth: Pride stooped, and kissed Humility:  
 Lust washed his miry hands, and, wedded, leaned  
 On chaste Desire: and falsehood laid aside  
 His many-folded cloak, and bowed to Truth:  
 And Treachery up from his mining came,  
 And walked above the ground with righteous Faith:  
 And Covetousness unclenched his sinewy hand,  
 And opened his door to Charity, the fair:  
 Hatred was lost in love: and Vanity,  
 With a good conscience pleased, her feathers cropped:  
 Sloth in the morning rose with industry:  
 To Wisdom, Folly turned: and fashion turned  
 Deception off, in act as good as word.  
 The hand that held a whip was lifted up  
 To bliss; slave was a word in ancient books  
 Met only; every man was free; and all  
 Feared God, and served him day and night in love.

How fair the daughter of Jerusalem then!  
 How gloriously from Zion Hill she looked!  
 Clothed with the sun; and in her train the moon;

And on her head a coronet of stars ;  
And girdling round her waist, with heavenly grace,  
The bow of mercy bright ; and in her hand,  
Immanuel's cross—her sceptre, and her hope."

We remark, secondly, that language the most forcible proceeds from the man who is most sincere. The way to speak with power, or to write words that pierce mankind to the quick, and therefore long exist, is to speak and write honestly. He who draws from his own sincere convictions, will touch and thrill kindred sentiments in every other breast. Hence the wisdom of Sidney's maxim,—“Look in thy heart, and write.” He who embodies his own deep emotions in the verbiage of his tongue and pen, addresses an eternal audience ; for human nature is identical, and its highest vernacular never changes.

A juggler may amuse, but he cannot convince ; he may even confound the spectator, but he will never persuade him. A true man lives not in the show of things but in their substance ; his soul is honest, actual, and he lives only in actualities. “What he says you may believe, and pawn your soul upon it.” God made him earnest, and it is his spontaneous nature to be in earnest with all the universe of God.

“Oh, how much more doth beauty beauteous seem,  
By that sweet ornament which truth doth give !  
The rose is fair, but fairer we it deem,  
For that sweet odor which doth in it live.”

No man can be first-rate who is not endowed with deep and strong convictions ; he must go to work in right good earnest, and will be efficient only so far as he is sincere. An experienced counsellor once remarked, that he never feared the effect upon a jury, of a lawyer who did not believe in his heart that his client ought to have a verdict. Among the most powerful means of influence which eloquence exerts is the conviction which is entertained of the sincerity of the speaker. If he lacks this important element its absence will be instinctively



felt, and both the advocate and his theme will either be neglected or despised. Deceit may be successfully practised in every other sphere, but in eloquence hypocrisy is impossible. In the popular mind, reason may be feeble and conscience dull ; but the instincts of our race are sure, and in a moment they will both detect and condemn the insincere.

" 'Tis not the many oaths that make the truth ;  
But the plain single vow that is vowed true."

Superficial minds usually lack sincerity, strong ones never ; for those who are honest in their advocacy, right or wrong, found their reason and their conduct on *felt* truth. Mirabeau prophesied of Robespierre, " That man will accomplish something, for he believes every word he says." This wretched man was an illustration of the fact that one may be fatally in error and yet be perniciously sincere. The elegant historian Lamartine, has recently said of him, that, " Crushed in the constituent Assembly by Mirabeau, by Maury, by Cazales ; conquered at the Jacobins by Danton, by Pethion, by Brissot ; obscured in the Convention by the incomparably superior eloquence of Vergniaud, if he had not been resolutely sustained by the idea which burned within him, and by the intrepidity of a will that felt itself capable of controlling all, because it governed itself, he would a thousand times have renounced the conflict, and retired to 'obscurity and silence. But to him it was much easier to die than to be silent, when his silence would have appeared to himself a desertion from his convictions. Therein lay his force. He was a man the most sincere of all the Revolution : behold in this fact why he was for a long time its obscure servant, then its favorite, then its master, and finally its victim."

Nothing in speech is effective that is not genuine. Mediocrity, when sincere, is much more powerful than the greatest talents perverted to selfish pursuits, and suborned to the promotion of hypocritical designs. Our Bible is the most influen-

tial of books, because it contains the mother-tongue of all the sincere.

We have adduced an instance which shows that even base men are indebted to convictions that are real for whatever success they attain; it should be particularly observed, in this connection, that the finest feelings are generally associated with the finest intellect, and the love of truth with the love of goodness. It is the inspired only that inspire. Poets, painters, sculptors, and the anointed prophets of God,—artists in every kingdom of the beautiful, and orators of every lofty strain, are the products and proofs of this truth. Shams are for the superficial and the frigid, they are sufferable to none others, and are impotent in their influence on all; but the sincerely ardent soul, boiling up from its profound depths and running over with masses of thought winged with flames of emotion, is allied, like a volcano, to all the elements of nature and is fed by them. The people of Verona, when they saw Dante in the streets, used to say, "See, there is the man that was in hell." So truthful were his words, so vivid his descriptions, that the common people felt that his epic was divine simply because its author was sincere. The great Italian could say with Cato,

"'Tis not my talent to conceal my thoughts.  
Or carry smiles and sunshine in my face,  
While discontent sits heavy at my heart."

God touches the lips of the sincere man, as Moses smote the rock, and thenceforth doctrines the most elevated and consolations the most grateful, flow forth to the multitudes famished in the deserts of earth. He toils without rancor, and sees the aspiring around him soar without envy, never more happy than when the laurels of more fortunate competitors cast a shadow upon his own brow. He lives only for the glory of his Maker, and the advent of superior talents is to him a cheering prophecy of the speedy realization of his most ardent desires. In

a nobler sense than was originally expressed, he magnanimously exclaims, "Sparta has many a nobler son than I." At the voice of such a man, and in his presence always, sentiments arise in the common heart of mankind which are worthy of answering to his own; he fascinates all by his sincerity, and moves everything by the strength of the convictions with which he is inspired. To him may be applied what Carlyle said of Burns: "Here are no fabulous woes or joys; no hollow, fantastic sentimentalities; no wiredrawn refinings, either in thought or feeling: the passion that is traced before us has glowed in a living heart; the opinion he utters has risen in his own understanding, and been a light to his own steps. He does not write from hearsay, but from sight and experience; it is the scenes he has lived and labored amidst, that he describes: those scenes, rude and humble as they are, have kindled beautiful emotions in his soul, noble thoughts, and definite resolves; and he speaks forth what is in him, not from any outward call of vanity or interest, but because his heart is too full to be silent. He speaks it too, with such melody and modulation as he can; 'in homely rustic jingle;' but it is his own, and genuine. This is the grand secret for finding readers and retaining them: let him who would move and convince others, be first moved and convinced himself."

The fountain of truth, like the sacred stream of Dodona, has the gift of enlightening those who seek it, and the power of igniting with glorious flames every torch which touches the surface of its water. But this source of illumination, to be profitable, must be approached with a discriminating mind and sincere heart, since truth and error are not generally unmixed. In the words of Ullmann, "the convictions of men never stand over against each other as black and white, day and night, God and the devil; but sunshine and shade spread themselves over all intellects in many various gradations." The highest truth, that of our holy religion, seeks not its favorite defenders from those who give it a hasty and uncandid approval, but

from those who greatly prize what they have diligently sought, and who habitually exemplify the excellence they have found. To such votaries the power of truth is as great as her beauty. Though all things conspire against her, she conquers all. As is said in Esdras, "She is the strength, kingdom, power, and majesty of all the ages." Her potency is like the sword of Michael, which,

"From the armory of God  
Was giv'n him temper'd so, that neither keen  
Nor solid might resist that edge: it met  
The sword of Satan, with steep force to smite  
Descending, and in half cut sheer; nor stay'd,  
But with swift wheel reverse, deep-entering, shar'd  
All his right side: then Satan first knew pain,  
And writh'd him to and fro convolv'd; so sore  
The griding sword with discontinuous wound  
Pass'd through him!"

This leads us to remark, thirdly, that the sincere are not only the most attractive, and the most forcible in speech, but their influence every way is the most benign. If there is anything beautiful and sacred on earth, it is the divine constitution and invincible power of truth. It is influence the most exalted and enduring. Men, by force, elevate empires which under force are again speedily reduced to ruin. Cyrus destroyed the work of Ninus, Alexander that of Cyrus, the Romans that of Alexander. Sooner or later, force antagonizes with force, one isolated dogma meets and annihilates another; but when truth supreme has conquered the universe, not in the sense of brutal exertion and carnal weapons, but in the spirit of sacrifice, then has it exemplified its inherent immortality and proved itself divine. And if they are unsophisticated fishermen that have been instrumental of that kind and degree of conquest,—if a handful of Galileans have founded an empire of conviction all round the globe, then its original force is evidently supernatural and glorious beyond all power of expression.

"Sincerity !

Thou first of virtues, let no mortal leave  
Thy onward path, although the earth should gape  
And from the gulph of hell destruction cry,  
To take dissimulation's winding way."

The sincere man is invincible because he is fortified with divine strength. Truth is his fortress, the rock which is both his quarry and his foundation, from which and upon which he is immovably built. This invests the heroical soul with an immortal charm which cannot be defaced ; his influence is both perpetual and universal, since reverence for truth and horror at falsehood is latent in every human breast.

The light of truth is essential to man ; without it he perishes, like the ancient astronomer, made to gaze on innumerable suns and competent to interpret the whole physical universe to his benighted race, being long imprisoned at Arcetri became imbecile and blind. True emotions and sincere words never perish. The great heart of humanity gladly receives and embalms every true utterance of the humblest of its offspring. Monsters and madmen may be canonized, while Galileo, sightless and friendless, is in prison ; but such enormities cannot often occur nor long exist.

"Some eminent in virtue shall start up,  
Even in perversest time :  
The truths of their pure lips that never die,  
Shall bind the scorpion falsehood with a wreath  
Of everlasting flame,  
Until the monster sting itself to death."

The advent of truth, like the dawn of day, agitates the elements, while it disperses the gloom. But the sincere man will not shrink before ill omens ; on the contrary, he will confirm the solidity of his principles by the nobleness with which he encounters opposing storms. He thus learns to proclaim aloud the sacred maxims of duty in the face of persecution,

and to do good for its own sake ; he grows inflamed with new zeal for justice, when he sees it misunderstood, mutilated, or banished ; and returns from the field of high moral conflict, more manly, great, and influential.

“ We must not stint  
Our necessary actions, in the fear  
To cope malicious censurers ; which ever,  
As ravening fishes, do a vessel follow,  
That is new trimm'd ; but benefit no further  
Than vainly longing.”

Truth in its highest form is indispensable to man, considered as a moral being, and is above all expediency, all accidental consequences. The light we most need is light from heaven ; for what is unaided reason but a benighted traveller across the tombs of earth wherein it scatters a little dust ? The first poverty, and the deepest, is the poverty of truth, as the first of riches is wealth of wisdom in the soul. When a man has recognized his highest need and has been enriched with truth, he should not exchange his fortune for all the opulence of earth. As sure as God is holy, and the human soul immortal, there can be no evil so great as spiritual ignorance, and no peril so great as duty evaded or postponed. It is false mercy to allow a poisonous dish to remain at a feast, because certain nutritious viands are connected therewith ; let the noxious ingredients be removed, that while the palate is gratified life may not be destroyed.

In every age men have arisen who in the benign influence of their lives proved that sincerity is the element of greatest power and the most divine. Such, to adduce another instance, was Milton. With Bacon, he believed that “ Truth, though hewn, like the mangled body of Osiris, into a thousand pieces, and scattered to the four winds, shall be gathered limb to limb, and moulded, with every joint and member, into an immortal feature of loveliness and perfection.” Not the slight-

est doubt seems ever to have passed over his mind, of the worth, might, and ultimate triumph of truth. With a lofty indignation he scorned all aids to her cause, but such as were derived from God's good spirit, and man's free mind. "For who knows not," says he, "that truth is strong, next to the Almighty; she needs no policies, nor stratagems, nor licensings, to make her victorious; those are the shifts and the defences that error uses against her power; give her but room, and do not bind her when she sleeps; for then she speaks not true, as the old Proteus did, who spake oracles only when he was caught and bound."

With these convictions of duty, Milton never hesitated in his course.

"He would not flatter Neptune for his trident;  
Or Jove for his power to thunder."

Living at a time of great spiritual conflicts, and conscious of the mighty talents which had been committed to his trust, he plunged into the great battles of that age, and nobly contended for the rights of mankind. "Though he loved peace, he loved truth more; he loved the souls of men; 'which is the dearest love, and stirs up to the noblest jealousy.' He preferred his duty before his rest. He knew the toil and danger which awaited him; but he knew also that he had taken his part in 'the race where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat.' His great soul was in itself gentle and open as day, and in gentler times would not have appeared in so warlike a guise. He would willingly have framed his measures to the concords of peace; 'but,' to use again his own matchless speech, 'when God commands to take the trumpet, and blow a dolorous or a jarring blast, it lies not in man's will what he shall say, or what he shall conceal.' The voice of duty, and the testimony of conscience, were to him the command of God; he did take the trumpet, and blow a blast 'of which all Europe rang from side to side;' a blast

which even yet is not silent, but has come echoing down from year to year to us of the present, and will still go sounding on, clear toned and thrilling, through the unknown depths of future time, and from region to region of the globe, till nations will hear and be roused up, that now are dead, and the heart of the whole world shall beat, like the heart of a single champion, at the summons of truth and liberty."

Every great character is based on sincerity. Be he saint or zealot, usurper or tyrant, he is nevertheless sincere; he has deep and earnest feelings, and so far he is inspired. Moral verities are like the strands of a rope compactly made, not one of which can be unduly strained without deranging all the rest. He whose soul is an unit composed of the greatest number of the most comprehensive truths, is the most strong. Says Schiller, "To be immortal, live in the whole;" and let us add, to be superior to the fleeting hour, live for eternity. Erasmus may have possessed much strength when he chose "a peaceful error rather than a boisterous truth;" but Luther was vastly more potent and benign when in response to his learned friend he exclaimed, "Peace if possible, but the truth at any rate!" Under the auspices which such sincerity produced, as

"At last the earthquake came—the shock, that hurled  
To dust, in many fragments dashed and strown,  
The throne, whose roots were in another world,  
And whose far-stretching shadow awed our own.  
From many a proud monastic pile, o'erthrown,  
Fear-struck, the hooded inmates rushed and fled;  
The web, that for a thousand years had grown  
O'er prostrate Europe, in that day of dread  
Crumbled and fell, as fire dissolves the flaxen thread.

The spirit of that day is still awake,  
And spreads himself, and shall not sleep again;  
But through the idle mesh of power shall break  
Like billows o'er the Asian monarch's chain;  
Till men are filled with him, and feel how vain,



Instead of the pure heart and innocent hands,  
Are all the proud and pompous modes to gain  
The smile of heaven;—till a new age expands  
Its white and holy wings above the peaceful lands."

The courageous missionaries of truth and righteousness distribute everywhere the seeds and fruits of virtue, and thus adopt beforehand all coming generations, by a sublime paternity of soul. Under the ministry of such benefactors of mankind, selfishness is rebuked, struggling merit receives encouragement, and history honors itself in commemorating those whom Heaven only can adequately reward. But even here such souls enjoy a rich foretaste of possession in hope; a drop of that flood of delights which exhilarates the sanctified with the celestial transports of divine love. Observe what a quickening and sustaining power this spirit of honest endeavor had on Pollok, the author of the "Course of Time."

"Here was an honest, earnest man, talking to you, in solemn tones, of the most solemn things, and *believing* every word which he uttered. The awful truths of our faith had made, early, a profound impression upon his mind. The doctrine of future punishment, especially, had seized hold on his imagination as with iron talons; and had found a fit commentary in the wild and desolate scenery where his infancy was nurtured. He never, for a moment, falters in pronouncing the tidings of wo against transgressors,—he is full of the terrors of the Lord; and, with prophetic earnestness, and prophetic severity, he voices them fearlessly forth, and we seem to hear the thunder talking to us of the eternal decrees, and describing to us the everlasting burnings. His descriptions of Hell, show a man who had long brooded over the overwhelming thought,—who had rolled the red idea in the furnace of his mind, till it was rounded into fearful distinctness of shape and symmetry,—who had studied the scenery of Pandemonium, under the canopy of the thunder-cloud, in lone and wizard glens, in desolate moors, in sullen tarns, miniatures of the 'last lake of God's wrath,' in

midnight dream, and drearer midnight wakefulness on his own pillow. And all such dark broodings he has collected and condensed into the savage figures which he has sculptured on the wall of the dwelling-place of the second death. And his pictures of punishment, though often tasteless, exaggerated, and unideal, are redeemed by their intense and burning sincerity."

"Mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good," says Solomon; and "the lips of truth shall be established forever." Truth is designed to be for us a germ sown in our intelligence, there to grow, develop itself, and produce its flowers and fruit forever. It is through this heavenly medium that is revealed the magnificent and immense temple of that religion which, built upon the immovable foundation of faith, is destined to fill the earth, rise to heaven, and crush under its immensity every presumptuous intellect and obdurate heart.

The sword of truth is two edged; it is a living image of the double power on which Jesus Christ has built his church. Armed with this, the man of God attacks, on one side the scholastic and vain-glorious by the force of reason; and, on the other, he reaps down the humble, the uneducated, and the wise themselves, by the internal force of penitent conviction. May the time soon come, when all shall feel the blows of that sword, the omnipotent hilt of which is in the hand of God, and its resistless double point everywhere.

"Hail! terror of the monarchs of the world,  
Unshaken be thy throne as earth's firm base,  
Live till the sun forgets to dart his beams,  
And weary planets loiter in their course."

## CHAPTER XVI.

### FALSEHOOD;

#### OR, THE DISSEMBLER ACCURSED.

ONE of the best descriptions extant of the deceptions practised by a hypocrite, is in Proverbs 26: 23. "Burning lips and a wicked heart are like a potsherd covered with silver dross." Here we have a vile substance rendered attractive to the unwise by the glitter of an unsubstantial show, a false heart adorned with useless dross. The verses immediately following are striking. "He that hateth, dissembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him. When he speaketh fair, believe him not: for there are seven abominations in his heart. Whose hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be showed before the whole congregation." The exposition of the sentiment contained in this Scripture will be given as we proceed to consider our subject under the varied aspects of falsehood in appearance, in suggestion, and in assertion.

In the first place, look at falsehood as, under deceitful appearances, it is often assumed. This point is more fully discussed in the chapter on deceit. Falsehood is frequently perpetrated under hollow and treacherous appearances, as pernicious as they are vile. "In many looks the false heart's history is writ, in moods and frowns, and wrinkles strange." The assumption of lying appearances is quite too common a practice among all classes of persons. The vain and dissembling coquette,

"Nymph of the mincing mouth, and languid eye,  
And lisping tongue so soft, and head awry;  
And flutt'ring heart, of leaves of aspen made,"

puts on an air of esteem for all the simpletons who court her regards, and seems most to favor those whom at heart she scorns.

“Bright as the sun her eyes the gazers strike,  
And like the sun, they shine on all alike.”

The demagogue talks with hypocritical fervor about the dear people, and assumes to be wonderfully indignant at their wrongs. He abuses the rich until by infamous manœuvring he obtains a little property of his own, and then he is the most purse-proud and insufferable of aristocrats. But at first he affects great humbleness of purpose in his fawning before the common people, and thus “dives into their hearts, with humble and familiar courtesy.” It is not long, however, before his dupes learn that,

“Not always actions show the man: we find  
Who does a kindness is not therefore kind;  
Who combats bravely is not therefore brave;—  
He dreads a death-bed, like the meanest slave;  
Who reasons wisely is not therefore wise—  
His pride in reasoning, not in acting, lies.”

Often where the lips speak fair, there is dissembling in the manner and hatred in the heart. Cain talked graciously with his brother in the field, while meditating his destruction. Saul pretended to honor David, while he was plotting his ruin. Absalom laid up deceit against his brother, and for two years dissembled by seeming to let him alone. It is not uncommon to find “a raven’s heart within a dove,” as when Joab covered his murderous intentions with professions of peace.

But, a still baser form of falsehood is, the assumption of a solemnity we do not feel; speaking in sanctimonious tones, and putting on demure looks in order the more hypocritically to act religion before the world. Churchill has said that,

“When fiction rises, pleasing to the eye,  
Men will believe, because they love the lie;

But truth herself, if clouded with a frown,  
Must have some solemn proof, to pass her down."

This is very true, and yet assumed sobriety and unreal cheerfulness do no good in the end. The assumption will be detected and the imposition scorned.

Under this head, it remains to speak of one other species of false appearance, and the worst of all—the appearance of indifference towards our sacred religion, for the sake of conciliating the favor of base persons who may be present. Says an old divine, "This is hypocrisy turned the wrong side outward, disguising a man in a fouler shape, and uglier garb, than that which is natural and true.

"And if we compare the two hypocrisies (that of pretending conscience which we want, and this of denying conscience which we have; that of seeming better than we are, this of seeming worse than we may be), this in nature may well seem more vile, in tendency more dangerous, in effect more mischievous than the other.

"There is in both the same falsehood, the same prevarication, the like contempt and abuse of God; but the hypocrite of whom we speak doeth worse things, more directly wrongful to God, more prejudicial to goodness, more harmful to the world.

"The specious hypocrite, counterfeiting goodness, and *having a form of godliness, without the power and reality of it*, doth yield to God some part (the exterior part) of his due honor and respect; but the sneaking hypocrite, disowning goodness, doth apparently desert, slight, and affront God: the one serveth God with his face and his voice, though *his heart be far from him*; the other doth not so much as sacrifice a carcass of obedience to him: that may bring some credit and advantage to goodness, strengthen its interest by his vote and countenance; this, by not avowing it, doth assuredly weaken its reputation and cause: that hypocrisy, as such, is a private and single evil, whereby a man doth indeed prejudice himself,

but doth not injure his neighbor, yea, may edify him by the appearing (which in this respect is the same with the real) goodness of his example; but this hypocrisy is a general mischief, a scandalous evil, a contagious pestilence, whereby a man not only harmeth himself, but wrongeth many others, seducing them into dissoluteness, infecting the world with base indifference to good, and easiness to comply with sin.

“It is indeed a sad thing that God and goodness should be deserted upon this account; that most men should be so uncharitable, so unjust, so imprudent, as to suspect all good men of hypocrisy; as if it were incredible that any man should heartily love or fear God (when it is rather strange that any man should do otherwise;) that any man in good earnest, or otherwise than in pretence and for sinister respects, should embrace virtue (when it is marvellous that a reasonable man should decline it;) that so many, of themselves inclinable to goodness, should be so weak as to be deterred from it by so vain an apprehension; and that the name of hypocrisy should drive away piety; that it should become desirable that hypocrites might abound in the world, lest religion both in truth and show should be discarded.

“In fine, we may otherwise suppress this odious imputation than by deserting goodness; we may demonstrate ourselves serious and sincere by an inflexible adherence to it in the continual tenor of our practice; and especially in some instances of duty, which are hardly consistent with hypocrisy: for no man can hold long in a strained posture; no man will take much pains, or encounter great difficulties, or sustain grievous hardships and afflictions, cross his appetites, forego gains and honors, for that which he doth not heartily like and love: he may counterfeit in ceremonies and formalities, but he will hardly feign humility, meekness, patience, contentedness, temperance, at least uniformly and constantly. Even the patient enduring this censure will confute it, and wipe off the aspersion of hypocrisy.”

Our second topic relates to falsehood in suggestion, lying that is acted, as well as assumed. The sin now under consideration is best described in the lines of Pope, wherein he denounces those who

“Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,  
And, without sneering, teach the rest to sneer;  
Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,  
Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike.”

Often are the most painful wrongs inflicted through the medium of covert inuendoes and malignant insinuations. Half of a fact is a whole falsehood. He who gives the truth a false coloring by a false manner of telling it is the worst of liars. Such was Doeg in his testimony against the priests. He stated the facts in the case, but gave them such an artful interpretation as to impart to them the aspect and influence of the most flagrant falsehoods. It was through the same mode of procedure that our Lord was condemned. A perverse misconstruction was given to his words, so that what was spoken in loyalty to the highest truth, was transformed into treason worthy of death. “When devils will their blackest sins put on, they do suggest at first with heavenly shows.” The pharisee, astute and punctilious in all that pertains to his hollow ritual, insinuates that all who dissent from his creed are inaccessible to grace, while it is manifest to all that the arrogant and exclusive hypocrite himself is most pompous when he is least sincere.

“Compar’d with this, how poor Religion’s pride,  
In all the pomp of method, and of art,  
When men display to congregations wide,  
Devotion’s every grace except the heart.”

Says Solomon, “All the ways of a man are clear in his own eyes: but the Lord weigheth the spirits.” Our Saviour encountered such men, and said to them, “Ye are they that jus-

tify yourselves before men : but God knoweth your hearts ; for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." It is natural for the insincere to disguise their foul motives with a fair show. "There is no vice so simple, but assumes some mark of virtue on its outward parts." Pilate washed his hands before the eyes of men, and supposed that this would exculpate him from the guilt of participating in the cruel fate of his victim. Those who were more directly the murderers of Christ, refrained from the defilement of the judgment-hall, and, by eating the passover, probably expected to escape all the pangs and penalties of guilt. But such dissemblers will one day verify in anguish the declaration of Him whose eyes were as a flame of fire—"Thou hast a name that thou livest, but thou art dead." Thenceforth forever will it be understood by the actor of falsehood damned, that external ceremonies, unaccompanied by a humble and upright heart, is a religion without foundation, and can expect no reward but eternal remorse.

"Who judged the Pharisee? What odious cause  
Exposed him to the vengeance of the laws?  
Had he seduced a virgin, wrong'd a friend,  
Or stabb'd a man to serve some private end?  
Was blasphemy his sin? Or did he stray  
From the strict duties of the sacred day?  
Sit long and late at the carousing board?  
(Such were the sins with which he charged his Lord.)  
No—the man's morals were exact; what then?  
'Twas his ambition to be seen of men;  
His virtues were his pride; and that one vice  
Made all his virtues gewgaws of no price;  
He wore them as fine trappings for a show,  
A praying, synagogue-frequenting beau."

The grand question is, in motive and action, are we right before God? He critically scans every heart. Saul thought he was serving the Lord acceptably, but the all-searching eye



discovered in him pride, covetousness, rebellion of spirit, and rejected him with scorn. Israel kept a strict fast and proclaimed a long humiliation, but the design was ostentation, and therefore was refused.

“Dishonor waits on perfidy. The villain  
Should blush to think a falsehood; 'tis the crime  
Of cowards.”

We have spoken of religious display; it is equally important that we should be superior to false fear. The true medium to be observed is, to be sincerely religious, and at the same time that we are so. There is not a more fearful menace in the Bible than that which is aimed at those who ignobly shrink from secret repentance and open obedience to Christ before the world. Duty may sometimes demand sacrifice, but the path of integrity is always safe. When Xenophanes was called timorous, because he would not venture his money in a game of dice: “I confess,” said he, “that I am exceeding timorous, for I dare not do an ill thing.” Such is the spirit and resolution of every honest person. He says, “I dare do all things that become a man; who dares do more is none.” Godliness is profitable in all things. Sincere piety is the best rule to follow in this life, and the only guide to eternal peace.

“First, I would have thee cherish truth,  
As leading-star in virtue's train;  
Folly may pass, nor tarnish youth,  
But falsehood leaves a poison stain.”

Falsehood in this form is sure to be detected. Says old John Howe, “All who are hypocrites are not artificial ones: there are a great many hypocrites, and the far greater part of them, who are mere bunglers at it; they are hypocrites without any skill or artifice; and so they take up a pretence which anybody, with half an eye, may penetrate and see through. As if, for example, a person who pretends to be a subject of

God's kingdom, and yet makes it manifest in the course of his conversation that he stands in no awe of God at all, which is a prime thing in that subjection. So the case is very often, as the Psalmist takes notice (Ps. xxxvi. beginning), The wickedness of the wicked saith in my heart, the fear of God is not before his eyes. His wickedness speaks in my heart, that he is one fearless of God, and who stands in no awe of him. So it is with many a man who professes somewhat of religion, that is, who doth not profess atheism, or rebellion against Heaven; yet the wickedness of his course and practice is such as to speak in another man's heart, sure this man has no fear of God before his eyes. Now how absurd is this, to put on a covering and disguise, which doth not hide a man at all! The whole course of their lives proclaims them to be no other than earthly, carnal worldlings, while they pretend to be designing for heaven; for every one who professes a relation to this kingdom, is understood to stand related not only to the inchoate but the consummate state of it, or the kingdom of heaven. But while they pretend themselves to do so, the pretence is easily to be seen through, and they who observe the ordinary course of their conversation, discourses, and designs, easily see that they are mere compositions of earth; and unless you can suppose a clod of clay can be carried up into heaven, they are never like to come there. It is to be seen that they are men, as it were made of earth; and all their discourses, converses, actions, and designs, smell of earth. It is therefore observable, that no man can make himself more ridiculous, than when he takes upon himself to act a part, to act it partially, and when he goes to personate another man, to do it absurdly: why he had better have contented himself to have appeared only in his own likeness, and in his natural face and posture. Thus the case is with such hypocrites; they do, it may be, disguise themselves *quoad hoc*, as to this particular thing; but then they lay themselves open in something or other else. Just as if some vain person should mightily pride himself in

some gay, rich apparel, which he had thrown on upon some part of him; and all the other parts appeared clothed with nothing but rags, or exposed to view more shameful nakedness. How ridiculous should we account such a person?"

Falsehood is acted or insinuated in a great variety of forms. "Oh, what authority and show of truth can cunning sin cover itself withal!" Pope Sixtus, when cardinal, counterfeited sickness, and all the infirmities of age, so well as to deceive the whole conclave. His name was Montalto; both parties supposed that he would not live a year, and on a division for the vacant apostolic chair, he was elected. The moment he had won the desired power, he threw away his crutches, and began to sing the *Te Deum* with a much stronger voice than his electors had bargained for; and instead of walking with a tottering step, he marched in their presence with a firm gait and perfectly upright. On some one commenting on this sudden change, he replied, while I was looking for the keys of St. Peter, it was necessary to stoop, but having found them, the case is altered. By this allusion, we do not intend to imply that the vice in question is limited to the papal church. It pervades all communions, and is disgraceful everywhere. But whoever the actor of falsehood may be, and whatever may be the object he has in view, the process is always the same. He insinuates just opposite to what he intends, professes one thing and does another. If the real language of his treacherous heart might speak aloud, it would confess,

"I do the wrong and first begin to brawl.  
The secret mischiefs that I set abroad,  
I lay unto the grievous charge of others.  
But then I sigh, and with a piece of Scripture,  
Tell them—that God bids us do good for evil.  
And thus I clothe my naked villany  
With old odd ends, stol'n forth of holy writ;  
And seem a saint, when most I play the devil."

One of the most common forms of this kind of hypocrisy is the acting of unreal grief. At those funerals where there is the most display, there is usually the least real sorrow. "Of all who flock to swell or see the show, who cares about the corpse?" Is not worldly pride the chief impulse, and the sable garments profusely arrayed on the occasion the most valuable part of the mourning? Pope was not the only man destined to witness what in two lines he so well described.

"Before her face her handkerchief she spread,  
To hide the flood of tears she did not shed."

It is always dangerous to have anything to do with those who are too base to be honest in the appearances they assume and the sentiments they suggest. You are liable at any moment to be approached by such as the left-handed Ehud came to Eglon, with a present in his hand, but a dagger under his skirt. Nor will it be strange if the most murderous attacks are accompanied by honied terms of esteem, as Joab saluted Amasa with, "Art thou in health, my brother?" and at the same moment "smote him under the fifth rib." Upon this incident, an old writer makes the following just remarks. "Had the heart of Amasa been privy to any cause of grudge, he had suspected the kiss of Joab; now his innocent eyes look to the lips, not to the hand of his secret enemy; the lips were smooth: "Art thou in health, my brother?" The hand was bloody, which smote him under the fifth rib; that unhappy hand knew well this way unto death, which with one wound hath let out the souls of two great captains, Abner and Amasa: both they were smitten by Joab, both under the fifth rib, both under a pretence of friendship. There is no enmity so dangerous as that which comes masked with love. Open hostility calls us to our guard; but there is no fence against a trusted treachery. We need not be bidden to avoid an enemy; but who would run away from a friend? Thus spiritually deals the world with our souls; it kisses us and stabs us at

once; if it did not embrace us with one hand, it could not murder us with the other: only God deliver us from the danger of our trust, and we shall be safe."

But it is time to pass to our third point. We have considered the character of falsehood assumed in unsubstantial appearance, acted in malignant suggestion, and we will now look at it under the aspect of direct assertion.

This is a crime which has been denounced by wise men of every age. When Aristotle was asked, what a man could gain by telling a falsehood? he replied, "Not to be credited when he shall tell the truth." Said lord Bacon, "A liar is brave towards God, and a coward towards man. For a lie faces God, and shrinks from man." The prevalence of this sin destroys personal worth and produces social anarchy. Without veracity, there can be neither virtue nor confidence anywhere. "The devils," says Sir Thomas Brown, "do not tell lies to one another; for truth is necessary to all societies; nor can the society of hell subsist without it." Shelley thought that Falsehood was the worst fiend on earth, and thus represents his murderous power in a dialogue with Vice. The latter inquires:

"VICE.

And, secret one! what hast thou done,  
To compare, in thy tumid pride, with me?  
I, whose career, through the blasted year,  
Has been track'd by despair and agony.

FALSEHOOD.

What have I done!—I have torn the robe  
From baby truth's unshelter'd form,  
And round the desolated globe  
Borne safely the bewildering charm:  
My tyrant-slaves to a dungeon-floor  
Have bound the fearless innocent,  
And streams of fertilizing gore  
Flow from her bosom's hideous rent,

Which this unfailing dagger gave . . .  
 I dread that blood!—no more—this day  
 Is ours, though her eternal ray  
 Must shine upon our grave.  
 Yet know, proud Vice, had I not given  
 To thee the robe I stole from heaven,  
 Thy shape of ugliness and fear  
 Had never gain'd admission here."

But the sacred word declares that the liar shall not escape. The habit of speaking lies in sport soon grows to more enormous guilt. The indulgence of falsehood effectually banishes all salutary fear. The wretch becomes too desperate in character to find any palliation at the bar of God. The warning is given beforehand, "All liars shall have their part in the lake, that burneth with fire and brimstone." Saith God, "he that speaketh lies, shall perish." The eternal Judge with whom we have to do is "A God of truth, and without iniquity; just and right is he—A God that cannot lie—Faithful and True." Nothing is more fearfully denounced by him than deceit. Under his righteous government, "lies and desolation" are linked together. "I will be a swift witness against false swearers—and them that fear not me—saith the Lord of Hosts."

"Lie not, but let thy heart be true to God,  
 Thy mouth to it, thy actions to them both.  
 Cowards tell lies, and those that fear the rod;  
 The stormy working soul spits lies and froth.  
 Dare to be true. Nothing can need a lie.  
 A fault, which needs it most, grows two thereby."

False assumption and false assertion are always supreme folly. It is much easier, safer, and better to be in reality what one aims to appear, than to maintain the appearance of being what he is not. The first great requisite, in every noble character, is absolute insincerity. Says Coleridge, "False-

hood and disguise are miseries and misery-makers, under whatever strength of sympathy, or desire to prolong happy thoughts in others for their sake or your own only as sympathizing with theirs, it may originate. The pre-eminence of truth over falsehood, even when occasioned by that truth, is as a gentle fountain breathing from forth its air-let into the snow piled over and around it, which it turns into its own substance, and flows with greater murmur; and though it be again arrested, still it is but for a time,—it awaits only the change of the wind to awake and roll onwards its ever increasing stream. But falsehood is fire in stubble;—it likewise turns all the light stuff around it into its own substance for a moment, one crackling, blazing moment,—and then dies; and all its contents are scattered in the wind, without place or evidence of their existence, as viewless as the wind which scatters them.”

It is greatly to be lamented that the spirit of falsehood often insinuates itself into those who are appointed to be the messengers of truth only. For instance, Ahab had clergy enough around him, such as they were. Four hundred prophets were reserved from appearing at the time of the challenge made by Elijah. They are consulted by Ahab, whose life they destroy by their dissembling. They care not so much about what God requires, as what Ahab would have them say. They saw which way the king's wishes inclined, and they bend their speech accordingly. “Go up, for the Lord shall deliver it into the hands of the king.” False teachers are intent only to please. A falsehood which flatters for the hour, is preferred by them above a stern truth which relates to practical piety and eternal peace.

But “truth hath a quiet breast,” and true men are calm and faithful in the greatest trials and before the fiercest foes. Josephus records a case in point, the speech of Eleazer before the tyrant Antiochus. Said the intrepid martyr, “Old age has not so impaired my mind, or enfeebled my body, but when religion and duty call upon me, I feel a youthful and vigorous

soul. Does this declaration awaken your resentment? Prepare your instruments of torture, provoke the flames of the furnace to a fiercer rage; nothing shall induce me to save these silver locks, by a violation of the ordinances of my country, and of my God. Thou holy law! from whom I derive my knowledge, I will never desert so excellent a master. Thou prime virtue, temperance! I will never abjure thee. August and sacred priesthood! I will never disgrace thee. I will bear it to my ancestors a pure and unsullied soul, as free from stain, as I stand in this place devoid of fear, amidst the parade of your threatening engines, and implements of martyrdom." Such are the choice spirits of earth, the men who honor God and human nature, the heroical souls who must have been in the great poet's mind when he said,

"Though all the world should crack their duty to you,  
And throw it from their soul; though perils did  
Abound, as thick as thought could make them, and  
Appear in forms more horrid; yet my duty,  
As doth a rock against the chiding flood,  
Should the approach of this wild river break,  
And stand unshaken yours."

Various are the motives that prompt men to treacherous falsehood. In the betrayal of Christ, we have lies acted, suggested, and declared under two of the most common forms; Judas lying for money, and the priests lying for place and power. "A man that beareth false witness against his neighbor is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow." Pity it is that these *mauls, swords, and sharp arrows* abound even in the church of God. It is not "setting the battle in array against the Philistines, army against army," but brother against brother, denomination against denomination. The Shibboleth of a party, not the standard of the cross,—the angry defence of a sectarian dogma, and not the humble exemplification of exalted doctrine,—is the watch-word of perpetual crimination and infamous slander.



"'Twixt truth and error there's this difference known,  
Error is fruitful, truth is only one."

The true man never disguises his intentions, nor presents adulation when he meditates injury. His "smiles must be sincere or not at all." But the liar always resembles his father, the prince of falsehood, in his attack on the fidelity of Jesus Christ. Says bishop Hall,

"Whoso marvels to see the devil upon his knees, would much more marvel to hear what came from his mouth: 'Jesus, the Son of the Most High God:' a confession, which, if we should hear without the name of the author, we should ask from what saint it came? Behold the same name given to Christ by the devil, which was formerly given him by the angel, 'thou shalt call his name Jesus.' That awful name, whereat every knee shall bow, in heaven, in earth, and under the earth, is called upon by this prostrate devil; and lest that should not import enough, since others have been honored by this name, in type, he adds for full distinction, 'the Son of the Most High God.' The good Syrophenician, and blind Bartimeus, could say, 'the Son of David.'

"It was well to acknowledge the true descent of his pedigree according to the flesh: but this infernal spirit looks aloft, and fetches his line out of the highest heavens, 'the Son of the Most High God.' The famous confession of the prime apostle, which honored him with a new name to immortality, was no other than, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God:' and what other do I hear from the lips of a fiend? None more divine words could fall from the highest saint. Nothing hinders but that the veriest miscreant on earth, yea, the foulest devil in hell, may speak holily. It is no passing of judgment upon loose sentences. So Peter should have been cast for a Satan, in denying, forswearing, cursing; and the devil should have been set up for a saint, in confessing, 'Jesus, the Son of the Most High God.' Fond hypocrite, that pleasest thyself in

talking well, hear this devil ; and, when thou canst speak better than he, look to fare better : but in the mean time know, that a smooth tongue and a foul heart carry away double judgments."

Here let us revert to the Scripture with which we began. " Burning lips and a wicked heart are like a potsherd covered with silver dross." The most infamous and wretched heart often appears under a decorous garb, as a worthless potsherd may be made to appear fair with a thin coat of glittering tinsel. " The tongue of the just is as choice silver ;" but the heart of the wicked which is nothing worth,—lips burning with professed esteem, yet covering a heart full of malicious purposes,—utters protestations which are no better than dross. Such were the lips of Joseph's brethren, when " they rose up to comfort their father," under the bereavement caused by their own perfidy. Such were the traitor's lips and heart, uniting with the faithful in professions of the sincerest faithfulness, and yet, false as hell, " betraying the Son of man with a kiss."

" The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.  
An evil soul, producing holy witness,  
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek ;  
A goodly apple rotten at the heart ;  
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath !

## CHAPTER XVII.

### DECEIT; .

#### OR, THE KNAVE UNMASKED.

**"AN inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed,"** Proverbs 20: 21. From this declaration we infer that, while dishonesty may seem for a while to promote rapid gain, it is sure to end in disappointment, disgrace, and dismay. Let us examine the subject, and see if the truth does not substantiate this principle as it respects the three points named.

In the first place, he who would hastily acquire an inheritance, and uses deceit as his means, is likely soon to possess only disappointment as the end. Truth is eternal, and destined to immortal honor; but falsehood is transient, and doomed to infamy. "The lip of truth shall be established forever; but a lying tongue is but for a moment." The fruit of Gehazi's lie was but a momentary pleasure, while the shame he thereby incurred was perpetual. None are so openly and surely blasted with the darkest hue of disgrace as those who habitually practise deceit. "He has everything that an honest man should not have; what an honest man should have, he has nothing."

"Seems he a dove? his feathers are but borrow'd,  
For he's disposed as the hateful raven.  
Is he a lamb? his skin is surely lent him,  
For he's inclined as are the ravenous wolves.  
Who cannot steal a shape, that means deceit?"

But however fair may be the outside which the deceiver assumes, he cannot long fail to become the open and avowed object of public execration. He will soon be addressed on all sides, as was a preceding knave, "Thou concludest like the sanctimonious pirate, that went to sea with the ten commandments, but scraped one out of the table." The underhanded dealings of the most adroit villain sooner or later come to light, involving their crafty perpetrator in chagrin and disappointment the most bitter. "The multiplying villanies of nature do swarm upon him," and transfix his dastard spirit with enduring pangs. "Ah," exclaims old Thomas Brooks, "how many thread-bare souls are to be found under silken cloaks and gowns! How often are worldly riches like hangmen; they hide men's faces with a covering, that they may not see their own end, and then they hang them. And if they do not hang you, they will shortly leave you; they make themselves wings and flee away. When one was commending the riches and wealth of merchants: I do not love that wealth (saith a heathen) that hangs upon ropes; if they break, the ship miscarrieth, and all is lost. He is rich enough (saith St. Jerome,) that lacketh not bread, and high enough in dignity, that is not forced to serve.

"Such goods are worth getting and owning, as will not sink or wash away, if a shipwreck happen, but will wade and swim out with us: and such are the spiritual riches that will attend those who, in the spring and morning of their youth, shall know the Lord, and serve the Lord, and get an interest in the Lord."

"He that hath an evil eye hasteth to be rich, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him;" and in the same connection, the preacher adds, "He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be unpunished." Lot hastened to acquire wealth. For a while all seems fair; but soon every worldly prospect is blasted, and he ends his days a degraded tenant of the desolate cave at Zoar. Abraham, on the contrary, was rich with-

out haste, for God blessed him ; thus he who sought the world lost it, and he who was ready to lose it, found it. Ahab envied Naboth the enjoyment of his vineyard ; and Jehoiakim by unjust means grasped all that came within his reach ; but both of them soon ended their career in deep disgrace. It is better to be poor by Providence, than rich by sin. He who leaps over the bounds of principle to acquire gain, will land in the gulf of ruin. "They that will be rich—use unrighteous means—fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, that drown men in destruction and perdition. But thou, O man of God, flee these things." Eternity is the reward of truth and the punishment of a lie ; but oh ! the infinite difference between this eternity—in heaven or in hell !

We remark, secondly, that deceit is doomed not only to disappointment but disgrace. "The hypocrite is good in nothing but in sight," and his false show soon miserably ends. Says the word of God, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper." The brain of the deceiver, "more busy than the laboring spider, weaves tedious snares to trap his enemies," but often the only reward he gets for his pains is to be caught in his own net. Thus Saul was willing to sacrifice his daughter in his malice towards David. "I will give him her, that she may be a snare unto him, that the hand of the Philistines may be against him." Such wretches abound in this bad world, and are the most dreadful foes to the peace of the good.

" Their friendship is a lurking snare,  
Their honor but an idle breath,  
Their smile, the smile that traitors wear,  
Their love is hate, their life is death."

But all moral history attests that the miscreant who constantly aims to deceive cannot long avert the disgrace he deserves. He whose face is,

“Visor-like, unchanging,  
Made impudent with use of evil deeds;  
A fellow by the hand of nature mark'd,  
Quoted, and sign'd, to do a deed of shame,”

is not permitted forever to wear the mask, but suddenly stands revealed in the light of almighty justice which thenceforth stamps its condemnation eternally on his guilty brow. “There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.” The darkest deed is wrought in the open face of an all-seeing God, and “set in the light of his countenance,” to “be proclaimed upon the house tops, before the assembled universe.” “The voice of Abel’s blood cried from the ground;” and forthwith the murderer became “a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth.” He learned, as every deceiver must learn, the meaning of Jehovah’s assertion—“Be ye sure your sin will find you out.” Conscience lashed Joseph’s brethren with the pangs of a sin deeply hid and long since committed. The covering which Saul threw over his crime cost him his kingdom. He pretended to confer on David a kindness, but covertly designed an injury. The intent which prompts a favor often constitutes its chief value. The greatest honors may be conferred with the purpose of destroying the recipient. Designing men not unfrequently combine treacherously to elevate a rival to an unnatural and unsafe degree, just for the malignant delight of witnessing his speedy and disastrous downfall. For being guilty of an offence like this, the leprosy of Naaman clave to Gehazi and his seed for ever.

“Beware of yonder dog;  
Look, when he fawns, he bites; and, when he bites,  
His venom tooth will rankle to the death:  
Have not to do with him, beware of him,  
Sin, death, and hell, have set their marks on him;  
And all their ministers attend him.”

The only way to be permanently safe is to be habitually honest. "He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely." On this Scripture, the learned Barrow remarks, "*Uprightly*, according to the original, might be rendered, *in perfection*, or, *with integrity*: and by the Greek translators in several places is supposed chiefly to denote sincerity and purity of intention.

"In effect, the phrase, *He that walketh uprightly*, doth import, one who is constantly disposed, in his designs and dealings, to bear a principal regard to the rules of his duty, and the dictates of his conscience; who, in every case emergent, is ready to perform that which upon good deliberation doth appear most just and fit, in conformity to God's law and sound reason, without being swayed by any appetite, any passion, any sinister respect to his own private interest of profit, credit, or pleasure, to the commission of any unlawful, irregular, unworthy, or base act; who generally doth act out of good principles (namely, reverence to God, charity to men, sober regard to his own true welfare); who doth aim at good ends, that is, at God's honor, public benefit, his own salvation, other good things subordinate to those, or well consistent with them; who doth prosecute his designs by lawful means, in fair ways, such as honest providence and industry, veracity and fidelity, dependence upon God's help, and prayer for his blessing: in short, one who never advisedly doth undertake any bad thing, nor any good thing to ill purposes; nor doth use any foul means to compass his intents."

The conscientious man who in all his dealings scorns to practise deceit feels assured that, however his pecuniary interests may prosper, he will not lack the support and consolation derived from a mind pure and upright. He is certain to triumph in the integrity of his heart, if not in the skill of his hands. Come what may, he says with Job, "Till I die, I will not remove my integrity from me. My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live." In carrying this high resolve into ex-

ecution, he verifies joyfully the declaration of the Psalmist, "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart."

It is by habitual ingenuousness, an erect and honorable demeanor, that one maintains respect for himself, and wins the esteem of others. In his private purposes, he is governed only by inoffensive motives, and therefore fears not the closest scrutiny of the public eye. The more severely he is examined the more certain is he to be esteemed. So transparent is his character, and so pure is his life, that windows in his breast would reveal nought but lucid purposes and an honest heart. Such a man will court the acquaintance of the sagacious, and thrive most in the clearest light. As the mists of prejudice are removed, and the mistakes of ignorance are corrected, his reputation increases both in splendor and extent; his whole career demonstrates that deceit was not the means he employed, nor was unholy gain either his chief passion or ultimate aim.

The righteous Governor of the universe is interested to protect and prosper such a man, and will most assuredly vindicate his reputation in every assault. "He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day." The promise in Job shall be his, "Then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot;" and in anticipation of the darkest hour he may triumphantly exclaim with the Psalmist—"Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy commandments."

An old writer on this subject inquires, "What is the conduct of the upright man? He is clear, frank, candid, harmless, consistent in all his behaviour, his discourse, his dealing. His heart commonly may be seen in his face, his mind doth ever suit with his speech, his deeds have a just correspondence with his professions; he never faileth to perform what he doth promise, and to satisfy the expectations which he hath raised.



“He doth not wrap himself in clouds, that none may see where he is, or know how to find him; may discern what he is about, or whither he tendeth.

“He disguiseth not his intents with fallacious pretences of conscience, of public good, of special friendship and respect.

“He doth use no disingenuous, spiteful, unjust tricks or sleights, to serve the present turn.

“He layeth no baits or snares to catch men, alluring them into mischief or inconvenience.

“As he doth not affect any poor base ends, so he will not defile his fair intentions by sordid means of compassing them; such as are illusive simulations and subdulous artifices, treacherous collusions, sly insinuations and sycophantic detractions, versatile whifflings and dodgings, flattering colloquings and glozings, servile crouchings and fawnings, and the like.

“He may discreetly pick out seasons, and embrace opportunities of righting or benefiting himself: but he never will seek or lay hold of advantages to prejudice others.

“He sometimes may repress insurrections of anger or disgust: but he never doth allow them to bake into rancor or malice.

“He may be apt to use courteous, affable, obliging demeanor, serving to breed friendships, and to stifle enmities: but he never thereby meaneth to gull, inveigle, and entrap men; or to procure instruments and aids of any perverse design.

“He is no enemy to himself, but (according to the obligations of reason and conscience) he hath always a regard to the good of others; nor is ever so selfish, as to be unjust or uncharitable to any man.

“The principal engines he doth employ for achieving his enterprises are, a careful and cautious providence in contriving, a sedulous and steady diligence in acting, a circumspect heedfulness not to provoke any man by offensive carriage, by injury, by discourtesy, to obstruct him; but rather by kind demonstrations and real beneficence to engage men to further

him in his proceedings: but especially his main instrument, wherein he most confideth, is devout supplication to God for his succor and blessing.

“Now, is not this conduct the most secure that can be? doth it not afford many great commodities and advantages? doth it not exempt from manifold fears, and cares, and crosses, and slaveries?

“It cannot but derive blessings from the God of truth, the great friend of simplicity and sincerity, the hater of falsehood and guile.”

Heaven wide from the character we have just described, and dismal as hell, is the Janus-faced and unprincipled dissembler.

“O serpent heart, hid with a flowering face!  
Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?  
Beautiful tyrant, fiend angelical!  
Dove-feather'd raven! wolfish-ravening lamb!  
Despised substance of divinest show!  
Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st,  
A damned saint, an honorable villain!”

Says Bunyan, in his inimitable allegory, “Then I saw in my dream, that the Shepherds had them to another place, in a bottom, where was a door in the side of a hill; and they opened the door, and bid them look in. They looked in, therefore, and saw that within it was very dark and smoky; they also thought that they heard a rumbling noise, as of fire, and a cry of some tormented; and that they smelt the scent of brimstone. Then said Christian, What means this? The Shepherds told them, This is a by-way to hell, a way that hypocrites go in at; namely, such as sell their birthright, with Esau; such as sell their Master, with Judas; such as blaspheme the gospel, with Alexander; and that lie and dissemble, with Ananias, and Sapphira his wife.” It is to be feared that this class of persons is not yet extinct on earth. They act in respect to religion, like Numa by his shield,—they form

many counterfeits of her, with which they make an ostentatious show on all public occasions; but the original they produce so seldom, and in such a grovelling way, that it is corroded by the rust of sloth, and disgraced by the unhallowed imitation.

But to the base deceiver disgrace is inevitable. "The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked;" the curse of his Maker, a curse that never cometh causeless. Under its blasting power the wicked must wither as he perpetrates his crimes, and writhe in his own chains of remorse forever. Zechariah tells us of the roll in the house of the thief and of the swearer—twenty cubits long, remaining in the midst of the house—consuming it, even with the timbers and stones thereof. Every one who dishonestly deals with his fellow-men is destined in fearful alarm to read the "hand-writing upon the wall," prognosticating his doom, telling him—"There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Ahab increased his house with great power and display, as if to set the curse pronounced against the unjust at defiance; but, at one stroke of outraged justice, all his munitions of safety were swept away. Who hath hardened himself against God, and prospered? Who hath resisted his will with impunity, and practised deceit with prolonged prosperity and ultimate success?

It may well be suggested that if Satan ever laughs, it is at hypocrites; they serve him with most menial spirit and receive the poorest pay; they submit to more drudgery and sacrifice in going to hell, than upright Christians do in attaining heaven. Renegades are always the greatest bigots, and they who are furiously zealous for selfish ends, are the most contemptible of men. Bishop Hall, speaking of Herod's treatment of John, remarks, "How inconsistent is a carnal heart to good resolutions! how little trust is to be given to the good motions of unregenerate persons! We have known when even mad dogs have fawned upon their master, yet he hath been too wise to trust them but in chains. As a true friend

loves always, so a gracious heart always affects good ; neither can be altered with change of occurrences. But the carnal man, like a hollow parasite or a fawning spaniel, flatters only for his own turn : if that be once either served or crossed, like a churlish cur, he is ready to snatch us by the fingers. Is there a worldly-minded man that lives in some known sin, yet makes much of the preacher, frequents the church, talks godly, looks demurely, carries fair ? Trust him not : he will prove, after his pious fits, like some resty horse, which goes on some paces readily and eagerly, but anon either stands still, or falls to flinging and plunging, and never leaves till he hath cast his rider."

Such immaculate pharisees are scandalized by any gentle treatment towards the feeble and fallen. They would accuse Jesus himself of too great liberality, saying "unto his disciples, why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners ?" Acting under the assumption of superior sanctity, they deprecatingly exclaim, "Stand by thyself ; come not near to me ; I am holier than thou." In the person of such a man it is pretty certain that you behold a hollow and heartless hypocrite. He who is most established in his own belief, is usually most tolerant to others ; and he who has the fairest virtues of his own, is least inclined to carp at the foibles of his fellow men. He commiserates more than he condemns. But the unsubstantial and selfish professor, constantly laboring only to denounce or deceive, is ready

" To kneel at many a shrine,  
And lay the heart on none."

Sometimes deceit is practised by the inconsiderate for amusement. "As a madman who casteth fire-brands, arrows, and death. So is the man that deceiveth his neighbor, and saith, Am not I in sport ?" He may not be malicious in purpose, but he little reflects how much misery his wanton mirth may occasion. But what he calls sport, in the sight of God

may be the most culpable madness. What has the creature of eternity to do with jesting and guileful trickery? The sin he commits in play, must be repented of in pain, or be the food of endless remorse.

Deceit, however, is usually premeditated with more malignity of purpose than that which the lunatic or trifler employs. He who betrayed Jesus, and the judge who surrendered him to popular fury, were representatives of those who are most recreant to duty and most skilful to destroy. That tongue which had bargained to sell his Master, dares say, Hail! and the lips which had already sealed the compact of his death, presumed to kiss him whom they had covenanted to kill. The unfortunate victim of such deceit and treachery, is ever compelled to exclaim,

“ Though some of you, with Pilate, wash your hands,  
Showing an outward pity; yet you Pilates  
Have here delivered me to my own cross,  
And water cannot wash away your sin.”

It is a great calamity to the world, that deceit so much abounds; it is especially dishonorable to the church, that so many of her members act like hypocrites. Let us beware of a sin so dark in its character, and so dreadful in its results; a sin which most provokes the wrath of heaven, and which even the Turks despise. A large body of infidels having on a certain occasion professed to Mahomet the Second their readiness to embrace his creed, he asked their motive, and, obliging them to confess that it was to be rid of taxation, dismissed them unreceived with the wise reply, “that he preferred sterling metal in his coffers to false professors in his church.”

In the third place, we remark that deceit, which first meets with disappointment, and leads to disgrace, is sure to end in ineffectual and unending remorse. Job feared, lest his “land and furrows should cry against him;” and let the modern tradesman beware lest his weights and measures, his ledger

and his conscience bear witness against him when God shall make inquisition for blood." "Divers weights are an abomination unto the Lord; and a false balance is not good."

Beware of the great deceiver who told Adam and Eve that they should "be as gods," when his design was to degrade them "below the beasts that perish." The deceitfulness of sin is most fatal, since it attracts by flattery, and destroys by delusion. It presents fascinating smiles, but conceals the cloven foot; offers the bait, but hides the hook; talks of freedom and indulgence, but conducts to slavery the most abject and destruction the most dire. Though wickedness be sweet in the deceiver's mouth, "though he hide it under his tongue; though he spare it, and forsake it not; but keep it still within his mouth; yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of asps within him." It is the decree of God, that both reason and conscience shall condemn the deceitful man and scourge him forever. Young man! studiously shun associates who would induce you to lie and cheat. They may palliate the crime, secrete its enormity, and for a while blind your eyes; but no finite power can assert the destiny of the guilty, nor conceal the awful pit of his eternal ruin.

"Oh, cursed, cursed Sin! traitor to God,  
And ruiner of man! mother of Wo,  
And Death and Hell,—wretched, yet seeking worse  
Polluted most, yet wallowing in the mire;  
Most mad, yet drinking Frenzy's giddy cup;  
Depth ever deepening, darkness darkening still;  
Folly for wisdom, guilt for innocence;  
Anguish for rapture, and for hope despair;  
Destroyed destroying; in tormenting pained;  
Unawed by wrath; by mercy unreclaimed;  
Thing most unsightly, most forlorn, most sad—  
Thy time on earth is past, thy war with God  
And holiness: but who, oh, who shall tell,  
Thy unrepentable and ruinous thoughts?  
Thy sighs, thy groans? Who reckon thy burning tears,

And damned looks of everlasting grief,  
Where now, with those who took their part with thee  
Thou sitt'st in Hell, gnawed by the eternal Worm—  
To hurt no more, on all the holy hills?"

Says Solomon, "The counsels of the wicked are deceit." Such were the counsels of Joseph's brethren to deceive their father; of Daniel's foes, under the pretence of honoring the king; of Sanballat, under the cloak of friendship; of Haman, under the profession of patriotism; of Herod, under the hypocritical appearance of worshipping the infant Saviour; in all which instances, the "corrupt fountain" of man's heart sent forth only "bitter waters," as desolating as they were impure.

One of the proverbs declares, "As righteousness tendeth to life; so he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death." He may be one,

"Who having, unto truth, by telling oft,  
Made such a sinner of his memory,  
To credit his own lie."

But though he "worketh a deceitful work," until the habit of fraud has become predominant in his nature, his doom, so far from being averted, will be fearfully enhanced. Says one, "How God laughs in heaven at the frivolous fetches of crafty politicians, and when they think themselves most sure, shames them with a detection, with a defeat! What an idleness it is for foolish hypocrites to hope they can dance in a net, unseen of heaven!" As God rules on high, ill-doing must incur a fitting penalty in the regions below. There is no power in sin to arrest the accelerated rapidity of its own downward career. The deceiver pursues evil to his own death. Abimelech doubtless expected peace as the result of his murderous work, but found remorse. Ahab anticipated rest from the riddance of Naboth, but encountered reproofs which were to his tortured soul like the "piercings of a sword." If such are the pangs even in this life, what will be the intensity of future

wo? The description of the poet contains something more than mere fancy,—it teems with awful truth.

“ Great day of revelation ! in the grave  
The hypocrite had left his mask ; and stood  
In naked ugliness. He was a man  
Who stole the livery of the court of heaven,  
To serve the devil in ; in virtue's guise  
Devoured the widow's house and orphan's bread ;  
In holy phrase transacted villanies  
That common sinners durst not meddle with.  
At sacred feast, he sat among the saints,  
And with his guilty hands touched the holiest things.  
And none of sin lamented more, or sighed  
More deeply, or with graver countenance,  
Or longer prayer, wept o'er the dying man,  
Whose infant children, at the moment, he  
Planned how to rob : in sermon style he bought,  
And sold, and lied : and salutations made  
In Scripture terms ; he prayed by quantity  
And with his repetitions long and loud,  
All knees were weary : with one hand he put  
A penny in the urn of poverty,  
And with the other took a shilling out.  
On charitable lists—those trumps which told  
The public ear, who had in secret done  
The poor a benefit, and half the alms  
They told of, took themselves to keep them sounding—  
He blazed his name, more pleased to have it there  
Than in the book of life. Seest thou the man !  
A serpent with an angel's voice ! a grave  
With flowers bestrewed ! and yet few were deceived.  
His virtues being over-done, his face  
Too grave, his prayers too long, his charities  
Too pompously attended, and his speech  
Larded too frequently, and out of time  
With serious phraseology—were rents  
That in his garments opened in spite of him,  
Thro' which the well accustomed eye could see  
The rottenness of his heart. None deeper blushed,  
As in the all-piercing light he stood exposed,



No longer herding with the holy ones :  
Yet still he tried to bring his countenance  
To sanctimonious seeming ; but, meanwhile,  
The shame within, now visible to all,  
His purpose balked ; the righteous smiled, and even  
Despair itself some signs of laughter gave,  
As ineffectually he strove to wipe  
His brow, that inward guiltiness defiled.  
Detected wretch ! of all the reprobates,  
None seemed maturer for the flames of hell ;  
Where still his face, from ancient custom wears  
A holy air, which says to all that pass  
Him by : *I was a hypocrite on earth.*"

This is vivid and strong language, but it is justified by the word of God. "The way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble." Without guidance, comfort, safety, or peace, the selfish deceiver hurries along till "his feet stumble on the dark mountains," and he sinks in "the blackness of darkness forever." "Evil pursueth sinners." Cain, Achan, and myriads like them are witnesses, that the universe has no refuge for guilt, and the delay of centuries does not weaken the certainty of punishment. As sure as the shadow follows the substance, as the avenger of blood pursued the manslayer—"evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow him." The career of deception at length is ended. The gulf of terrific retribution yawns wide at the detected culprit's feet. He is hurled over the brink, and then

"One long, loud shriek swells on the air,  
The thrilling cry of dark despair,  
And all is sad and silent there."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### FLATTERY;

#### OR, THE LURKING FOE.

IN Prov. 26: 28, it is said that "a flattering mouth worketh ruin." The nature of flattery, and the ruin it works, will be unfolded in the present discussion. Let us proceed to remark, that flattery is a matter indifferent to none; is most influential where it is least deserved; and is fatally pernicious on all who blindly yield themselves to its control.

In the first place, however much flattery may be denounced, few or no persons are superior to its influence. A cynical charlatan or religious clown may aspire to be thought above the weaknesses of vanity, and of such a reputation he will be most vain at heart; still is he excessively alive to the "ceremonious compliments of praise," and to tell him that he cannot be flattered is to flatter him most effectually. Glenalvon understood this when he exclaimed,

"Honey'd assent,  
How pleasant art thou to the taste of man,  
And woman also! flattery direct  
Rarely disgusts. They little know mankind  
Who doubt its operation: 'tis my key,  
And opes the wicket of the human heart."

Shrewd adventurers, in order to obtain what they desire, speak what they do not believe, and the basest flattery often obtains what substantial merit and sound reason would never procure. A member of the Grammont family one day found

cardinal Richelieu employed in jumping, and, with all the cunning flattery of a Frenchman and a courtier, offered to jump against him. He suffered the man of political power to jump higher, and soon after found himself rewarded with a lucrative office.

“The firmest purpose of a human heart,  
To well-tim'd, artful flattery may yield.”

Many specious maxims have obtained general credence in the world which are in reality false. Among these is the saying that “old birds are not to be caught with chaff.” Whereas the fact often is that, “The older the bird, the more he flatters himself that he is worth catching. He is easily caught, were it worth while ; but you have caught nothing, perhaps, when you have got him. Chaff is too valuable, too precious, to be expended wastefully ; and because you are not so silly as to throw powder away, he conceives himself to be shot-proof. As nobody tries to catch him, he fondly persuades himself that his own exceeding cunning secures him from capture. ‘Take me if you can,’ chirps he ; and goes dodging about the woods, as though a flock of golden vultures were pursuing him. He is quite safe. He has not the felicity of being in peril. The young condor, pressed even by vulgar appetite, will not do him the honor of dining upon him. His toughness and antiquity are sure safeguards. He is only not captured, because there is nothing captivating about him. But if, by any chance, he hath a tail-feather fit for plucking, or a bone worthy the distinction of being picked, then is your old bird in imminent danger, for you may catch him when you like with half a pinch of chaff. The tender foxling, not arrived at the maturity of slyness, who never tasted chicken of his own stealing, shall take him without a ruffle of his plumage—only by pronouncing its dingy brown to be rich crimson.

“What flocks of old birds flutter about in society, all sure that they never shall be caged, and all safe until a lure is laid

for them ! But the longer they live, the less chance have they of avoiding the trap. The older they grow, the slenderer the means of escape. The starched matron is fain to put faith in the compliment which, in her day of youth and grace, she knew to be nonsense. She is now only half-handsome, and can no longer afford to think her eyes less brilliant than she is told they are. She must make up, by exaggerating what is left, for the loss of what is gone. She is not now in a condition to call a fine remark rank flattery ; she is obliged to believe in self-defence. If her mirror will not admit of this, she has other resources ; she has sage counsel, admirable judgment, perfect knowledge of the world. Admire these, and with a dignity which you call Siddonian, she confesses that she is yours. You have only to convert the compliment to her beauty at twenty, into a tribute to her sagacity at fifty-five. Tell her she is not to be imposed upon, and you impose upon her effectually. Admire her penetration, and you will not find her impenetrable."

" Would some god the giftie gie us  
To see ourselves as others see us."

Says Solomon, " As the fining-pot for silver, and the furnace for gold ; so is a man to his praise." Fulsome adulation is a severer trial to the strength of principle than reproach. The strongest test to a man, the most searching furnace for his heart, is flattery. " If he is vain and light," says bishop Hall, " he will be puffed up with it. If he be wise and solid, he will be no whit moved therewith." The universal influence of adulation, the baseness of its motives, and the worthlessness of its objects ordinarily, are well set forth in the following sketch by Cowper.

" Man praises man. The rabble all alive,  
From tippling benches, cellars, stalls, and sties,  
Swarm in the streets. The statesman of the day,

A pompous and slow-moving pageant, comes.  
Some shout him, and some hang upon his car,  
To gaze in his eyes, and bless him. Maidens wave  
Their kerchiefs, and old women weep for joy :  
While others, not so satisfied, unhorse  
The gilded equipage, and, turning loose  
His steeds, usurp a place they well deserve.  
Why? what has charm'd them? Hath he saved the State?  
No. Doth he purpose its salvation? No.  
Enchanting novelty, that moon at full,  
That finds out every crevice of the head  
That is not sound and perfect, hath in theirs  
Wrought this disturbance. But the wane is near,  
And his own cattle must suffice him soon.  
Thus idly do we waste the breath of praise,  
And dedicate a tribute, in its use  
And just direction sacred, to a thing  
Doom'd to the dust, or lodged already there."

The professed Christian who yields to seductive flattery is in great peril. A haughty demeanor; "loving to have the pre-eminence;" a supercilious fondness to give an opinion, and quick offence if it be not taken—this is the dross of the wise man's furnace, not the gold. But when a man is humbled by praise, conscious how little he deserves it, bearing his honors meekly, and perpetually stimulated to more beneficent deeds, then does the purging flame not only prove the real metal, but brings out "a vessel of honor, meet for the Master's use."

Beware of bestowing or seeking praise unadvisedly. Said the excellent Mr. Simeon, "We should feel as if our ears were stung with blasphemy, when we discover any attempt to transfer the crown of glory from the head of the Redeemer to that of any of his servants." And the pious Flavel with great propriety exclaims, "Christian! thou knowest thou carriest gunpowder about thee. Desire those that carry fire to keep at a distance. It is a dangerous crisis, when a proud heart meets with flattering lips." Absalom was tried in the fining-pot, and found "reprobate silver." Herod, inflated by the

boisterous praise of his flatterers, "gave not God the glory," and was blasted in eternal shame. On the contrary, Joseph and David maintained their humility in the midst of official advancement and universal admiration; Daniel preserved his consistency when most severely tempted; the apostles clung with singleness of heart to their Master's glory, when all the world tempted them to be recreant, and thus did they become model-heroes, whose sterling worth the furnace only made more bright.

We have said that flattery is a matter of indifference to none. Let it be observed, secondly, that it is often the most effective where it is least deserved. Persons of the least intrinsic merit are usually the most vain, and the most easily inflated with hollow praise. In every community, there are those who delight to "rain sacrificial whisperings in the ear" of those who are as vain and frivolous as themselves. But "he that loves to be flattered, is worthy of the flatterer;" the parties thus mutually engaged in fulsome adulation, are commonly of equal degradation and the victims of each other's guile.

"No visor does become black villany,  
So well as soft and tender flattery."

The danger lies in the passionate fondness of the human heart for attention. Especially is this to be observed in females; whatever may be the motives of the courtier, he who is most assiduous will in all probability be the most successful. Says the shrewd author of *Lacon*, "In the first place—preference and precedence are indispensable articles with them, if we would have our favors graciously received; they look, moreover, to the mode, the manner, and the address, rather than to the value of the obligation, and estimate it more by the time, the cost, and the trouble we may have expended upon it, than by its intrinsic worth. Attention is ever current coin with the ladies, and they weigh the heart much more scrupulously than the hand. A wealthy suitor purchases a

watch for his idol, studded with gems; an artificer *makes* a far less costly one for his favorite, and I need not add which will be most propitiously received, since there will be one person at least in the world, who will be certain that during the whole process of the fabrication of the present, the donor was thinking of her for whom it was designed."

But this foible is by no means limited to any one class or sex. We are all more or less the dupes of those who, "with bated breath and whispering humbleness," sway more by their empty praise than the best logician can by argument.

"O that men's ears should be  
To counsel deaf, but not to flattery!"

Persons are always affected most by extravagant encomiums on what they least possess. A girl with a prettily insipid face and vacant skull will not thank you for be-praising her beauty; that is a matter of course; but intimate that she has intellect, that she is "smart," and you throw her into absolute ecstasy. On the other hand, tell the ancient juvenile who "with age and envy has grown into a hoop," that she positively bears "wreathed smiles, such as hang on Hebe's cheek," and you have sublimated her at once into the third heavens, from which sublime altitude of self-esteem she blesses you with all the affection left in her withered heart. Now any one yet rejoicing in a few gleams of common sense can by this rule tell in an instant whether the suitor is sincere or not. It is certain that "where fair is not, praise cannot mend the brow;" and if one praises in us qualities which we are conscious of not possessing, it is evident the flatterer is treacherous in spirit, and courts favors he does not deserve.

Let it never be forgotten that the most imminent peril lies in trusting one's fortunes for a moment to such a lurking foe. In him "nought is certain save the uncertainty of all." Such "lovers swear more performance than they are able, and yet reserve an ability that they never perform; vowing more than

the perfection of ten, and discharging less than the tenth part of one."

It is not the object of the flatterer to signalize merit and inspire confidence, so much as to screen foibles and stimulate lust. He would involve his victim in inextricable ruin through the blinding influence of corrupt adulation ; and in this he usually succeeds, as a little grease covers a great quantity of poor broth.

"O, what may man within him hide,  
Though angel on the outward side."

Solomon warns us to "go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge." Fellowship with unprincipled flatterers is the prelude to impotent and eternal remorse. Occasional contact with such persons may be necessary in the ordinary affairs of life, but let such interviews be as few and brief as possible. If you perceive a disposition to speak flippantly of virtuous conduct and sacred duties, go immediately from his presence, else "she who delivers is damned."

"That, sir, which serves and seeks for gain,  
And follows but for form,  
Will pack when it begins to rain,  
And leave thee in the storm."

Courtesy is always a becoming grace, but the guardianship of personal honor is something more—it is a most sacred obligation. Whenever the lurking foe would insinuate his pernicious influence within the holy precincts where stands the "shrine of virtue," do not sacrifice purity to complacency, but repel the wretched invader at once, telling him, "you play the spaniel, and think with wagging of your tongue to win me." Ben Jonson was right when he said,

"Of all wild beasts, preserve me from a tyrant ;  
And of all tame—a flatterer."



But, we again remark, that what is here deprecated is not uncongenial to the natural taste of depraved mankind. In this melancholy fact, lies our greatest bane. In the words of Dean Swift, it must be confessed,

"'Tis an old maxim in the schools,  
That flattery's the food of fools;  
Yet now and then, your men of wit  
Will condescend to take a bit."

The old and admirable bishop Leighton makes the following remarks on the topic now under consideration.

"Art imitates nature, and the nearer it comes to nature in its effects, it is the more excellent. Grace is the new nature of a Christian, and hypocrisy that art that counterfeits it; and the more exquisite it is in imitation, it is the more plausible to men, but the more abominable to God. It may frame a spiritual man in image so to the life, that not only others, but even the hypocrite himself, may admire it, and favoring his own artifice, may be deceived so far as to say and to think it lives, and fall in love with it; but he is no less abhorred by the Searcher of hearts, than pleasing to himself. Surely this mischief of hypocrisy can never be enough inveighed against. When religion is in request, it is the chief malady of the church, and numbers die of it; though, because it is a subtile and inward evil, it be little perceived. It is to be feared there are many sick of it, that look well and comely in God's outward worship, and they may pass well in good weather, in times of peace; but days of adversity are days of trial. The prosperous state of the church makes hypocrites, and her distress discovers them; but if they escape such trial, there is one inevitable day coming, wherein all secret things shall be made manifest. Men shall be turned inside out; and amongst all sinners that shall then be brought before that judgment-seat, the most deformed sight shall be an unmasked hypocrite, and the heaviest sentence shall be his portion."

The revelations of the last day, much more clearly even than close observation in the present life, will show that,

“Not always do the fairest flowers diffuse  
The richest odors, nor the speckled shells  
Conceal the gems.”

The most deadly project is often draped in the fairest religious habiliments, because the worse the intent is, the better appearance it desires to make. No devil is so dangerous as the religious devil. He is a sheep without, a wolf within, who, if he ever speaks truth will confess,

“Why, I can smile, and murder while I smile;  
And cry content to that which grieves my heart;  
And wet my cheek with artificial tears;  
And frame my face to all occasions.”

The way in which fiendish flatterers sometimes put on an air of sanctity to accomplish their infernal purposes is finely noted by an old commentator on a well known Scripture incident. “When the devil himself puts on gravity and religion, who can marvel at the hypocrisy of men? Well may lewd men be good preachers, when Satan himself can play the prophet. Where are those ignorants, that think charitably of charms and spells, because they find nothing in them but good words? What prophet could speak better words than this devil in Samuel’s mantle? Neither is there at any time so much danger of that evil spirit, as when he speaks best.

“I could wonder to hear Satan preach thus prophetically, if I did not know, that as he was once a good angel, so he can still act what he was. While Saul was in consultation of sparing Agag, we shall never find that Satan would lay any block in his way: yea, then he was a prompt orator to induce him into that sin; now that it is past and gone, he can lade Saul with fearful denunciations of judgment. Till we have sinned, Satan is a parasite; when we have sinned, he is a ty-

rant. What cares he to flatter any more, when he hath what he would? Now, his only work is to terrify and confound, that he may enjoy what he hath won: how much better it is serving that master, who, when we are most dejected with the conscience of evil, heartens us with inward comfort, and speaks peace to the soul in the midst of tumult!"

As is the prince of deceivers so are all his children, false in professions of esteem, fond of the slightest breath of praise, recreant to all vows, and most treacherous to the most confiding. Says Dr. Young,

"A man I knew, who lived upon a smile,  
And well it fed him; he look'd plump and fair,  
While rankest venom foam'd through every vein;  
Living, he fawn'd on every fool alive;  
And, dying, cursed the friend on whom he lived."

Thus far in our discussion, we have remarked, first, that flattery is indifferent to none; and, secondly, that it is most influential on persons of the least merit. We remark, thirdly, its influence is pernicious on all who blindly yield themselves to its control. God said to Abraham, "Walk before me, and be thou *perfect*:" be sincere; a real character and not a sham; be entire, sound, and not a hollow resemblance—a hypocrite. Pittacus, an ancient philosopher, challenging Philon, the Athenian captain, to single combat, carried a net privately, and so overcame him. Such is the habitual procedure of deceptive flatterers, but the true man scorns to employ means so base. So far from courting adulation, his indignant protestation is, "He does me double wrong, that wounds me with the flatteries of his tongue."

But the lurking foe, whose infamy language cannot fully paint, has no scruples of conscience. His highest ambition is to "sport an hour with beauty's chain, then cast it idly by." To him the burning lines are fitly addressed,

"Thy love is lust, thy friendship all a cheat,  
Thy smiles hypocrisy, thy words deceit."

Flattery is pernicious, because it excites in the mind an idea of some good quality which it does not possess. When Alexander the Great had received from an arrow a wound that would not heal, he said to his parasites, you say that I am Jupiter's son, but this wound proves me a feeble man. Undeserved praise is always fatal in its effects on the vain-glorious dupe. More danger lurks in adulation than in abuse, since it is the slaver that kills, and not the bite. They who are voracious of vain compliments, drink from a Circean cup, which first exhilarates to madness and then destroys. Says the author of the *Christian Companion*, "Ah! how many young men might have been very good, who are now exceedingly bad, by hearkening to flatterers, and affecting flattery? Flattery undid young Rehoboam, Ahab, Herod, Nero, Alexander, etc. Flatterers are soul-murderers, they are soul-undoers; they are like evil surgeons, that skin over the wound, but never heal it.

"Smooth talk proves often sweet poison. Flattery is the very spring and mother of all impiety; it blows the trumpet, and draws poor souls into rebellion against God, as Sheba drew Israel to rebel against David; it put our first parents upon tasting the forbidden fruit; it put Absalom upon dethroning his father; it put Haman upon plotting the ruin of the Jews; it put Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, upon rebelling against Moses; it makes men call evil good, and good evil, darkness light, and light darkness. It puts persons upon neglecting the means of grace, upon understanding the means of grace: it puts men upon abusing God, slighting Christ, and vexing the Spirit; it unmans a man, it makes him call black white, and white black; it makes a man change pearls for pebbles, and gold for counters; it makes a man judge himself wise, when he is foolish; knowing, when he is ignorant; holy, when he is profane; free, when he is a prisoner; rich, when he is poor; high, when he is low; full, when he is empty; happy, when he is miserable.

"Ah! young men and young women, take heed of flatterers, they are the very worst of sinners; they are left of God, blinded by Satan, hardened in sin, and ripened for hell."

"A man that flattereth his neighbor spreadeth a net for his feet." In view of this and other Scriptures, Bunyan's pilgrims were warned—"Beware of the *flatterer*." Yet, "forgetting to read the note of directions about the way," they fell into his net, and, even though delivered, were justly punished for their folly. "Some, that smile, have in their hearts, I fear, millions of mischief." Unwary souls are easily tempted, and unstable Christians are constantly in danger of a fall. Beware of the lurking foe. Says Helen Plumptre, "Surely it is enough for us to have foes within and without to contend with, without having snares for our feet laid by our fellow-pilgrims. Oh! it is a cruel thing to *flatter*. The soul is often more exhausted and injured by disentangling itself from these nets, than by the hottest contest with principalities and powers. Those who have once known the torture the believer undergoes, while this poison is pervading his soul, the bitter, lowering medicines he must take as antidotes, the frightful oblivion of lessons of humility which he has been studying for years, will, I think (unless much under the influence of the enemy of souls), not administer the noxious potion a second time." The feet of many strong men have been unexpectedly entangled. The parasites of Darius deified him for a month, to make him the tool and victim of their malicious plot. Ziba's smooth words drew David into deep disgrace; and, by listening to lying prophets, Ahab became infatuated by flattery, and was soon involved in ruin.

"'Tis too much proved,—that, with devotion's visage,  
And pious action, we do sugar o'er  
The devil himself."

But let us remember the words of Solomon, "Hell and destruction are before the Lord: how much more then the hearts

hangs by them : he had wont to weigh his hair, and was proud to find it so heavy ; now his hair poiseth the weight of his body, and makes his burden his torment. It is no marvel if his own hair turned traitor to him who durst rise up against his father. That part, which is misused by man to sin, is commonly employed by God to revenge : the revenge that it worketh for God, makes amends for the offence whereto it is drawn against God. The very beast whereon Absalom sat, as weary to bear so unnatural a burden, resigns over his load to the tree of justice : there hangs Absalom between heaven and earth, as one that was hated and abandoned both of earth and heaven ; as if God meant to prescribe this punishment for traitors : Absalom, Ahithophel, and Judas, die all one death : so let them perish that dare lift up their hand against God's anointed !"

Nothing is more common than for the wicked to use righteousness as their cloak. It has been suggested that, if Satan should write a book, it would be in praise of virtue, because the good would purchase it for use, and the bad for ostentation. Under the assumption of profound esteem, the flatterer, intent on ruining his victim, wears an outward expression of fidelity as foreign to his heart, as a smile upon the face of the dead. The kiss of the apostate was the most bitter earthly ingredient in the agonies which Christ endured.

" An open foe may prove a curse,  
But a pretended friend is worse."

Beware of flattery and flatterers. Guard against confiding in those who lack high moral principle, and lurk in your path only to betray and destroy. " Truth loves open dealing ;" but the false-hearted ever go masked, and rest not till their unsuspecting dupe is plunged into inextricable and eternal despair. In the language of Pollok,

" Take one example, one of female wo.  
Loved by her father, and a mother's love,

they cannot in their hearts honor themselves, so they cannot esteem those whom they find like unto them; especially they despise those whom they observe to be so base and silly, as against their own judgment and conscience to fear their displeasure, or to regard their censure; looking upon them as vassals to their humor, and renegadoes from their own conscience."

No persons are in greater danger than those who trust to the smiles of this deceitful world. Its hollow courtesies and unsubstantial blandishments are most treacherous when they seem most fair. Its frowns are safer, because we know how to regard them; but its most captivating favors are worthy of nothing but suspicion, because they are prompted only by selfishness and deceit. If, trusting to our eyes only, we implicitly follow nothing but external signs and fascinating appearances, we shall be very likely to meet either unmingled falsehood, or uncertain truth. The holy prophet Samuel was thus led astray with respect to the fine aspect of Saul; but he who judges not by the outward appearance corrected the apprehensions of his servant saying, "Look not on his countenance, nor on the height of his stature, because I have refused him; for God seeth not as man seeth."

Nothing is more unsafe to be trusted, than the fair protestations of a false heart. Ammon too confidently went to a feast in the house of Tamar, and when his heart was merry with wine, Absalom suddenly smote him to death. The retribution which this lurking foe met was striking; he was caught by the hair in the branches of an oak, and thus miserably expired. Says one, "Absalom was comely, and he knew it well enough: his hair was no small piece of his beauty, nor matter of his pride; it was his wont to cut it once a year, not for that it was too long, but too heavy; his heart would have borne it longer, if his neck had not complained: and now the justice of God hath plaited a halter of those locks. Those tresses had formerly hangd loosely dishevelled on his shoulders: now he

Not atoned for by imputed blood,  
Nor by the Spirit that mysterious works,  
Unsanctified. Aloud her father cursed  
That day his guilty pride which would not own  
A daughter whom the God of heaven and earth  
Was not ashamed to call his own; and he  
Who ruined her, read from her holy look,  
That pierced him with perdition, manifold,  
His sentence, burning with vindictive fire."

O! if hell has a pit hotter and more intolerable than all the rest, a just God must surely reserve it for the lurking foe—the seducer damned.

END.



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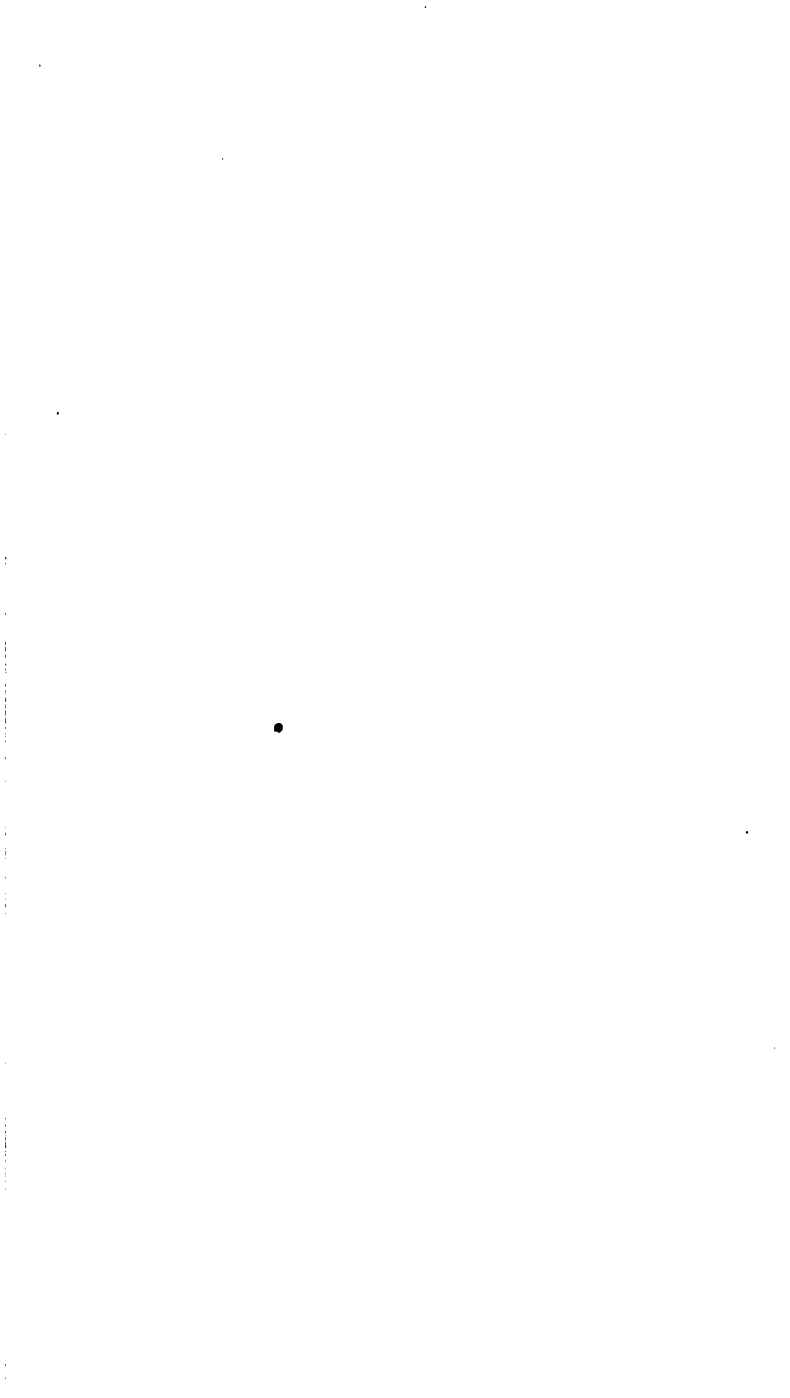
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